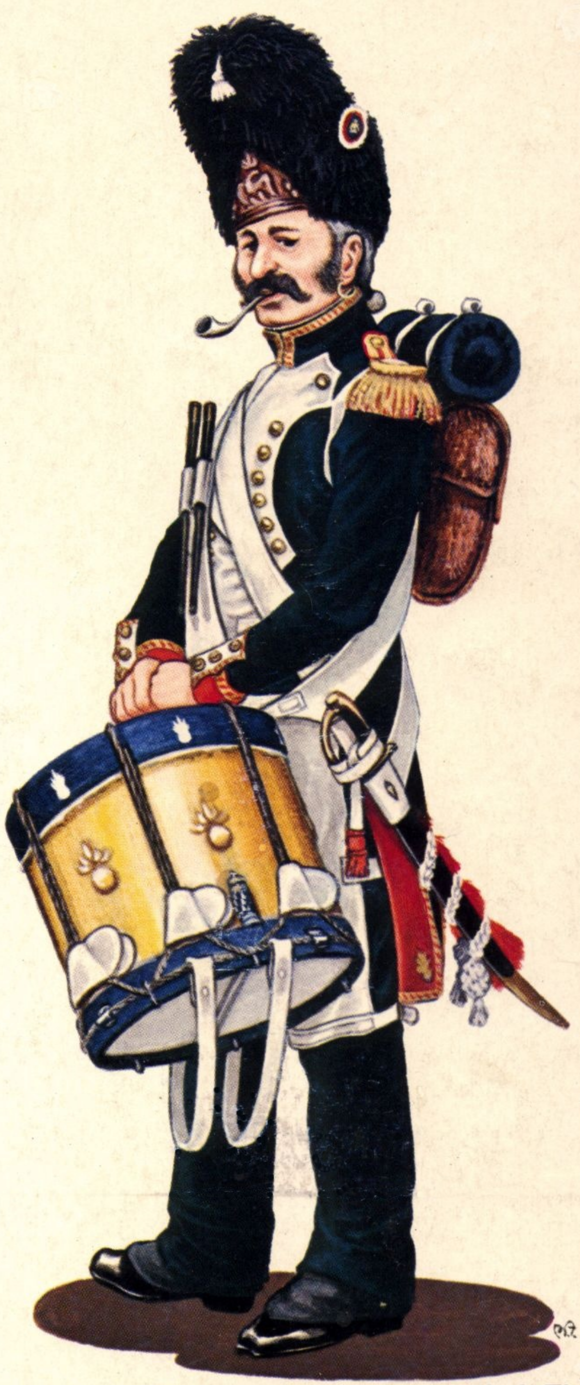
SOLDIERS of the NAPOLEONIC WARS

By BRYAN FOSTEN

French Imperial Guard Infantry, June 1815

(6) The Uniforms



Drummer in Undress, Grenadiers à Pied. The drummer wears the undress coat with plain flat gold lace on the collar and cuffs and blue service trousers.

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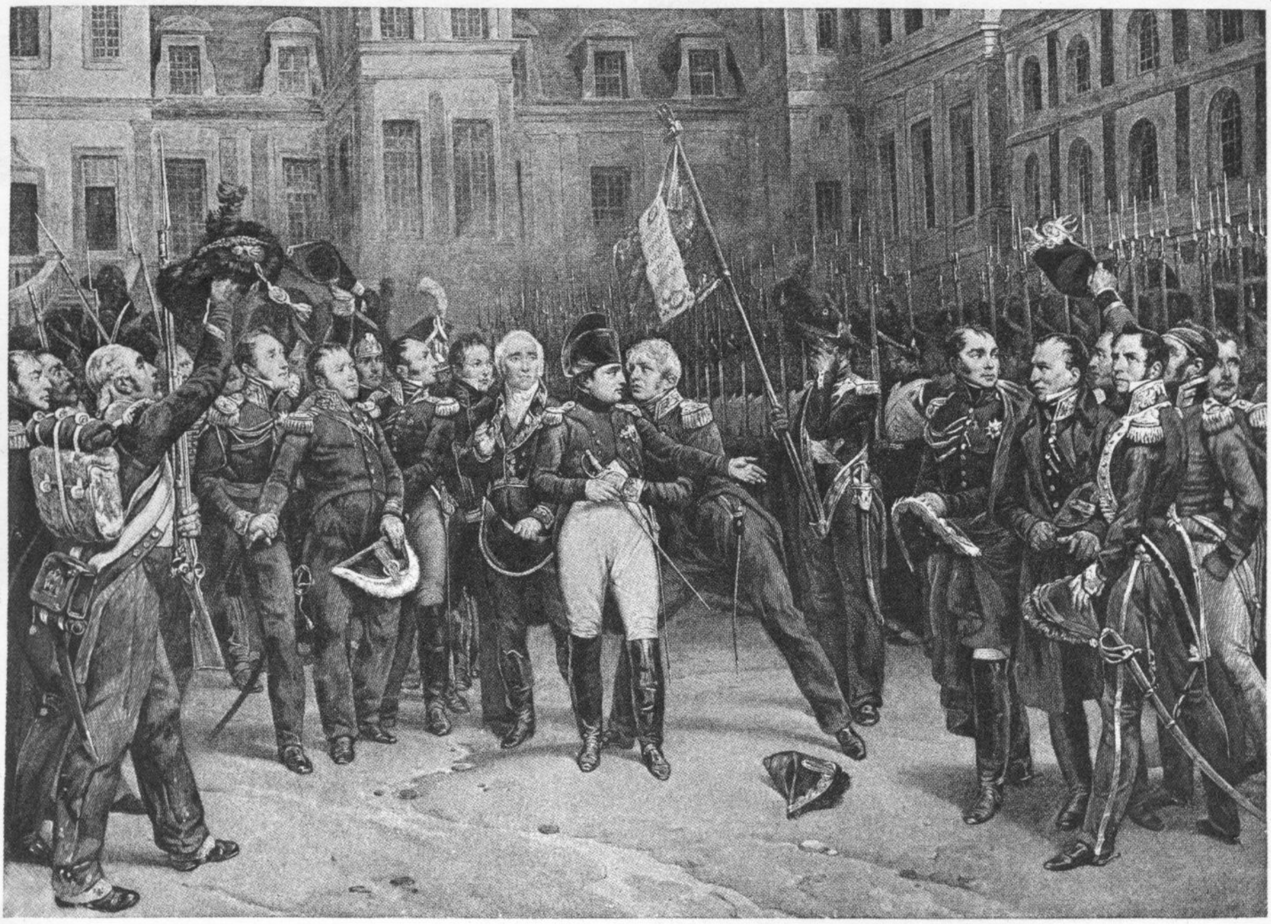


Napoleon's farewell to his staff officers and the men of the Grenadiers à Pied at Fontainebleau, on April 20, 1814, before leaving France for exile. This is from the Painting by Emile Vernet.

The Uniforms

Grenadiers

The Bearskin Cap

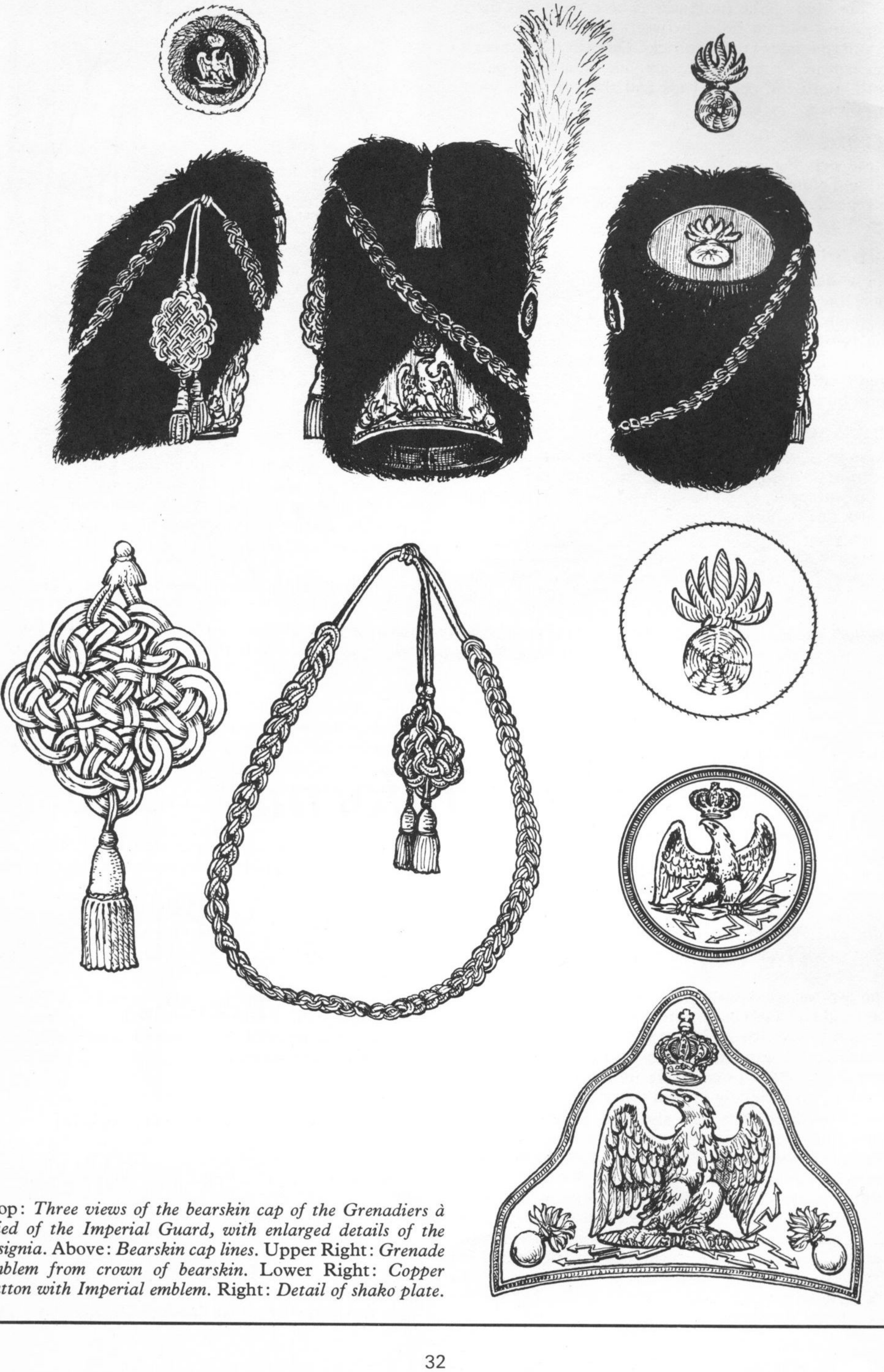
The cap was made of a stiffened dark brown bearskin carcass and had a red cloth patch on the back with a large white cotton grenade embroidered in its centre. On the front was a red copper metal plate stamped with the eagle with the Imperial Crown above its head and a flaming grenade set on obliquely in each lower corner, the flames pointing inwards. The cap also had a white woollen knotted cord looped around and a small cord and tassel which hung over the top. The cord had a 'raquette' with pennant tassel on the right side. Note that some of the contemporary authorities show two 'raquettes' and some only one. It may have been a way of distinguishing the 1st from the 2nd Regiment but this is conjecture. On the left side of the cap was a cloth cockade-tricolour, blue centre, red, and a white outside rim in the centre of which was a yellow crowned eagle. From a socket behind the cockade a tall red plume was worn.

Sergeants and Sergeant Majors: The front plate was red copper, the cords were a mixture of red and gold wool and the grenade on the red patch was gold embroidered.

Officers: The bearskin may have been a little bigger and fluffier, the front plate was gilded, the cords were gold and the grenade on the rear was gold embroidered. The plume was red for company officers and white for the staff (an aigrette was worn on parade).

The Uniform Coat

Known as the 'Habit' the garment was made in 'Imperial Blue' cloth with a collar of the same colour as the coat, white lapels, red cuffs, white three-pointed cuff flaps and red turnbacks. The vertical pocket flaps were piped red. The buttons were copper and were stamped with the crowned eagle. On each shoulder was a red bridle loop for the epaulettes. Each lapel was closed by seven uniform buttons, six at the bottom and one at the top; there were three further buttons on each pocket in



Top: *Three views of the bearskin cap of the Grenadiers à Pied of the Imperial Guard, with enlarged details of the insignia.* Above: *Bearskin cap lines.* Upper Right: *Grenade emblem from crown of bearskin.* Lower Right: *Copper button with Imperial emblem.* Right: *Detail of shako plate.*

the skirts, three on each cuff flap and two at waist level at the junction of the turnbacks. There were also three buttons and button holes between the bottom of the lapels and the start of the turnbacks. On each red turnback was an 'aurore'* embroidered grenade on a white patch of cloth. Both the pocket flaps and the cuff flaps were three-pointed.

Buttons

These were flat and stamped with an eagle, looking to its left and clutching a thunderbolt in its talons. Over the eagle's head the Imperial Crown. The buttons had a milled rim.

Epaulettes

These shoulder ornaments, the traditional badge of the French élite soldier had a scarlet shoulder strap and oval field a double twisted scarlet crescent and a deep fringe of scarlet twisted woollen cord. The whole epaulette was sewn on a white underlay. The epaulette was passed under the red bridle loop on each shoulder and retained by a uniform button near the collar.

Long Service Chevrons

These were worn on the left upper arm and consisted of chevrons in 'aurore' wool placed so that the point of the chevron was point up. The distinctions for Grenadiers and corporals were as follows:

Each ten years of service – 1 chevron
15–20 years' service – 2 chevrons
20–25 years' service – 3 chevrons

Sergeants and Sergeant Majors had gold chevrons.

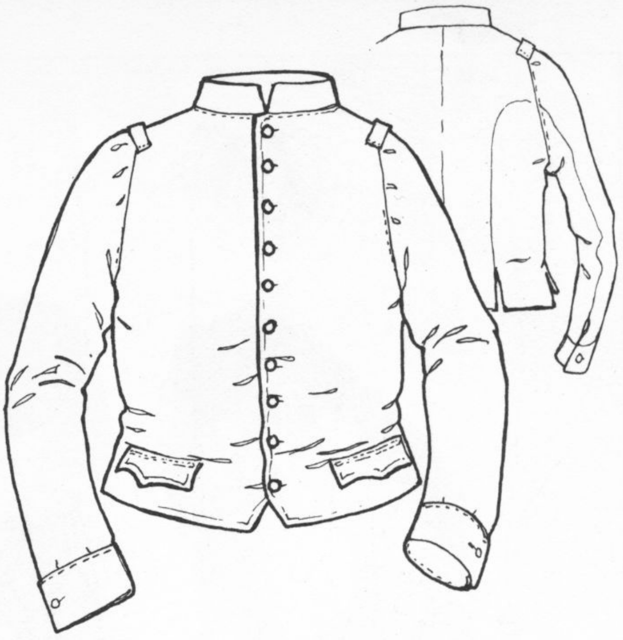
Officers: The coat was the same pattern as that of the Grenadiers but naturally made in better quality cloth. The buttons were gilded and the grenades on the turnbacks were in gold embroidery. On each shoulder a gold bridle loop of special design to retain the epaulettes. Note that in the Guard the officers' epaulettes had no separate design for each rank as in the line. The epaulettes for the Grenadiers were all the same. Junior officers continued to wear the epaulette (with fringe) on the left shoulder and the 'contre-epaulette', ie, the epaulette but without fringe on the right.

The Guard epaulettes were really splendid ornaments comprising a heavily embroidered strap part in a spangled chevron design with the field of the crescent in a basket weave pattern all enclosed in a raised rococco border. In the centre of this field a padded raised embroidered flaming grenade, all in gold wire and with a double crescent of raised and padded twisted gold wire. From beneath the crescent a fringe of bullion was suspended. The officers wore a gilded gorget when on duty. This had a silver eagle in the centre surrounded by a silver wreath of oak and laurel leaves (eagle only according to some authorities).

Sergeants and Sergeant Majors: They wore the same coat as the Grenadiers, in better quality for the sergeant majors. Badges of Rank were as follows:

Sergeant Major

Two bars of gold lace placed obliquely above each cuff from seam to seam, all on red cloth. Length of service chevrons also gold on red cloth.



The waistcoat.

The strap part of the epaulettes had gold and scarlet stripes, the crescent was of gold twisted wire, and the fringe was formed of layers of red and gold. The bearskin cords were also red and gold knotted wool. Gold grenades were carried on the bearskin cloth patch and on the turnbacks. Epaulette bridles were gold and red. The sword knot was red and gold.

Fourrier

One bar of gold lace from seam to seam was set obliquely on the arm above the elbow on red cloth. Two bars of 'aurore' wool were set obliquely on the sleeve above each cuff (as for the corporal). Sergeant's bearskin cords, grenades and sword knot were worn.

Sergeant

One bar of gold lace was set obliquely above each cuff on red cloth; there were red and gold bearskin cords, and gold grenades on a bearskin cloth patch and on the turnbacks. Sword knot was red and gold.

Corporal

Two bars of 'aurore' cloth were set obliquely above each cuff.

NCOs had long service chevrons which were 'aurore' for corporals and gold for sergeants and sergeant majors.

Waistcoat

This was in white cloth with sleeves and a lower collar and with small brass buttons and two pockets with three point flaps set near the lower edge.

Breeches

These were of white cloth with a small front fall and reaching to below the knee.

Gaiters

These were worn in the following styles:

Parade – Long white gaiters with white, cloth covered buttons, and buckled below the knees with white straps.
Summer – Long white gaiters with black buttons.
Winter – Long black woollen gaiters.
Under trousers – Grey gaiters.

Trousers

Blue cloth trousers were worn on the march and on campaign in cold weather and loose white linen trousers

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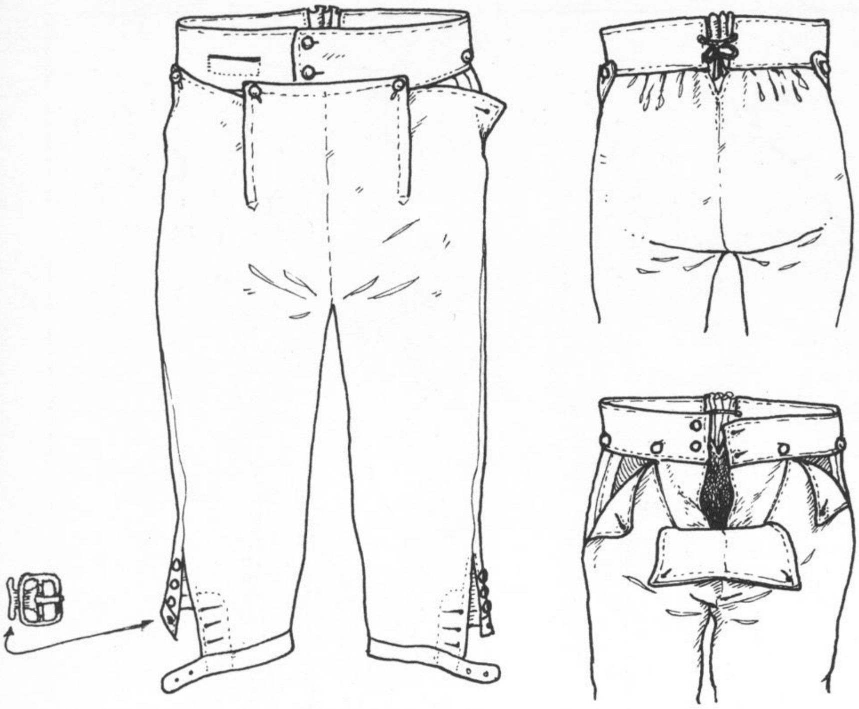
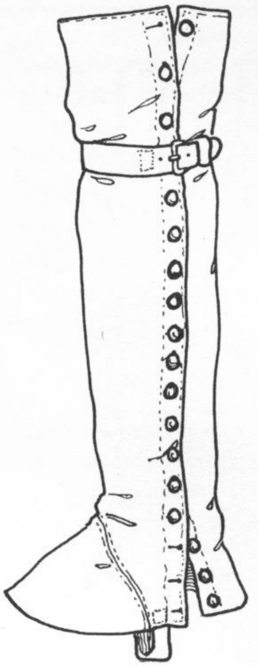
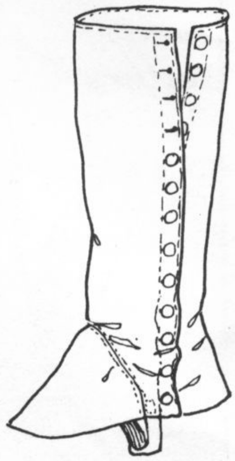
* Note that 'aurore' is a peculiarly French colour which has no British precise equivalent. It has been described as an orange, a golden yellow and a pale orange when applied to different regiments. In the case of the Guard it is said that the colour was a 'pale orange'.



Breeches, showing fastening details.



Long white gaiters.



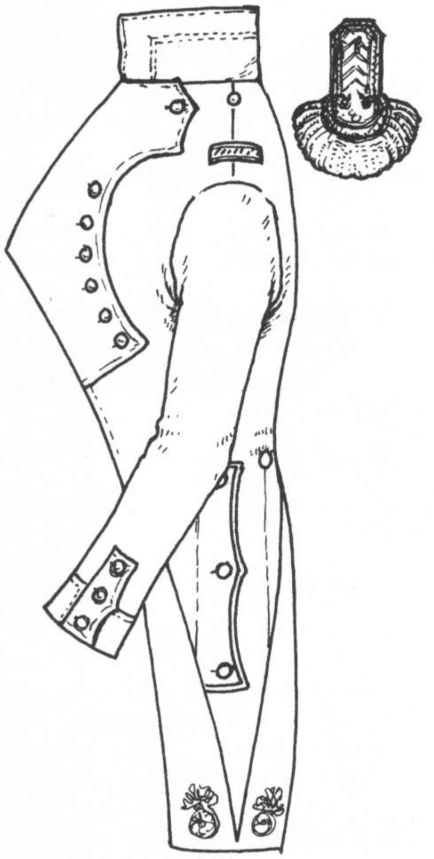
Short woollen gaiters.

in the summer. When the Elba Guard returned many were wearing white, blue striped ticken trousers.

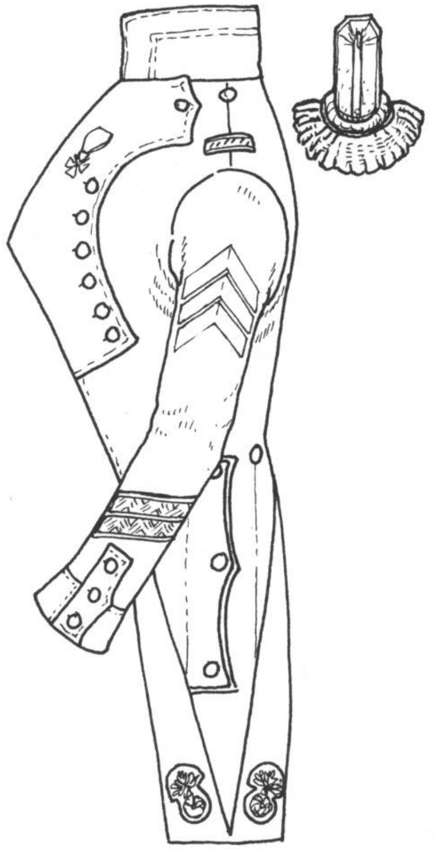
The officers wore white breeches and long white gaiters for grand parades and ceremonial duties around the palace. Otherwise they usually wore white breeches, 'nankeen' in the summer with fawn cuffed jockey boots.

Gloves

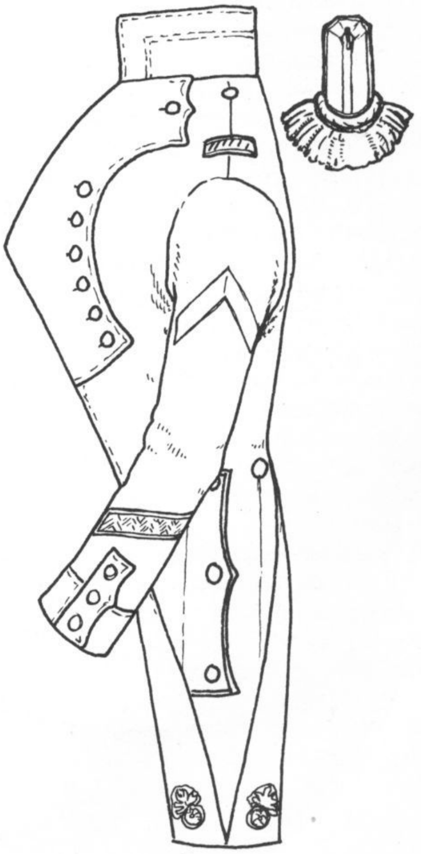
Short white cotton gloves were worn on parade by the NCOs and white doeskin gloves were worn by the officers.



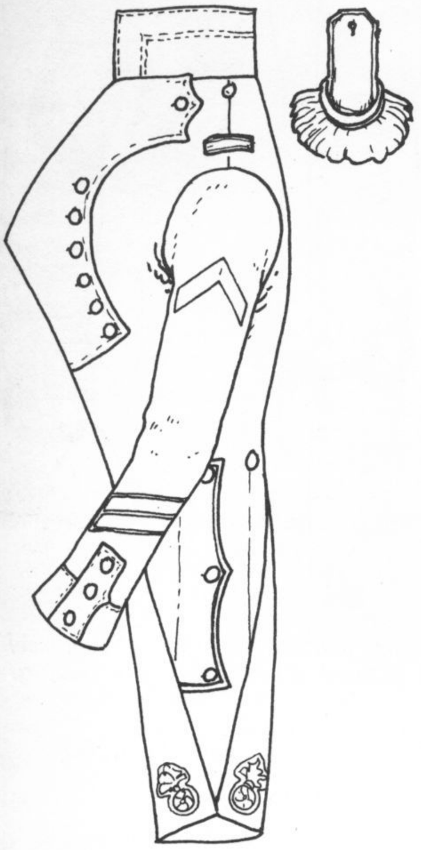
Officer



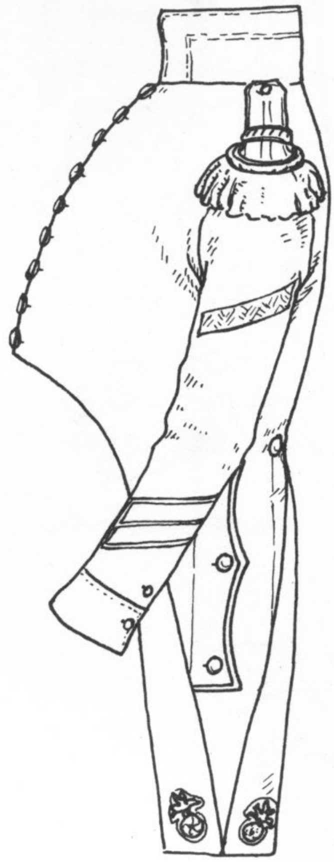
Sergeant Major.



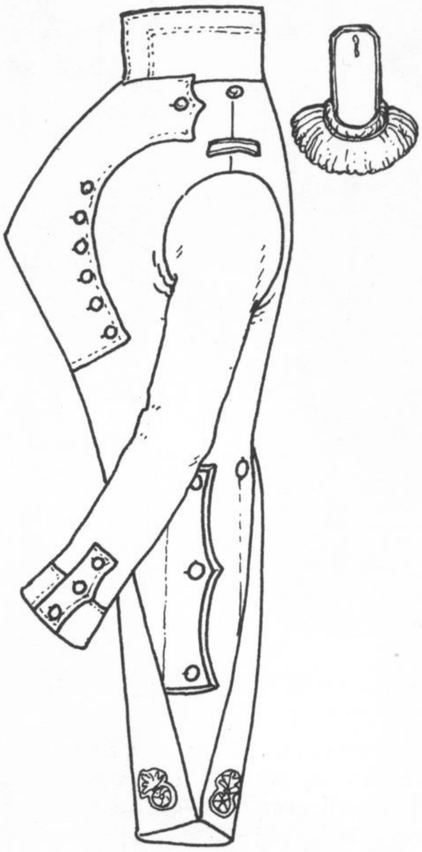
Sergeant.



Corporal.



Fourrier (surtout).



Grenadier.

Grenadier's turnback ornament.
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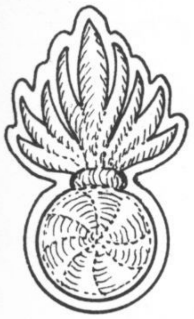
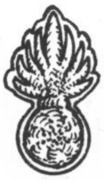
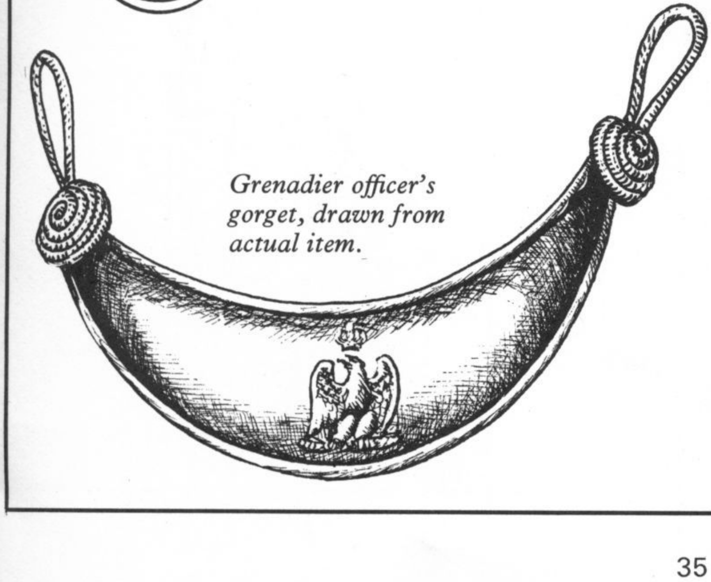
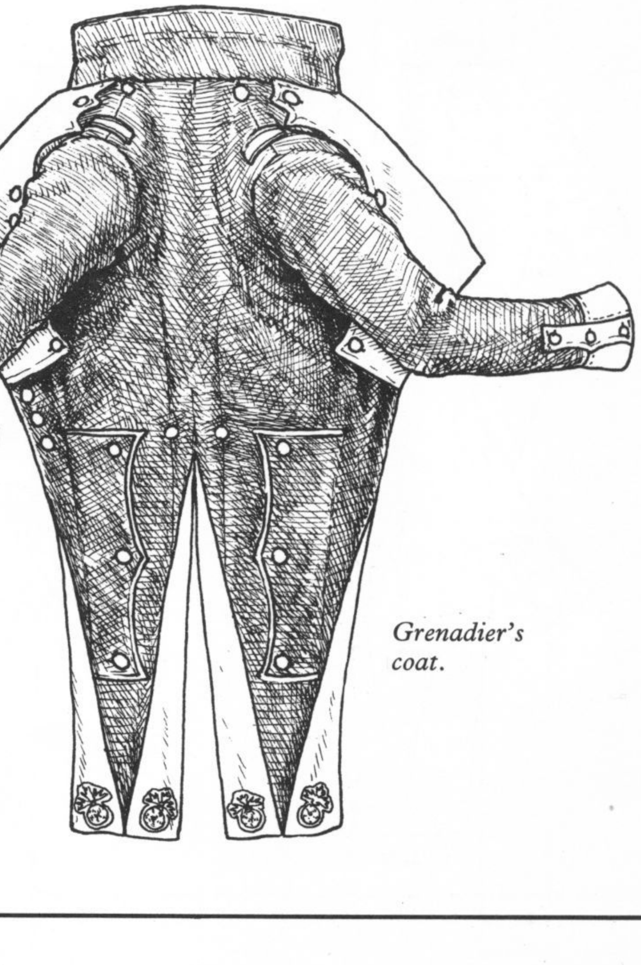




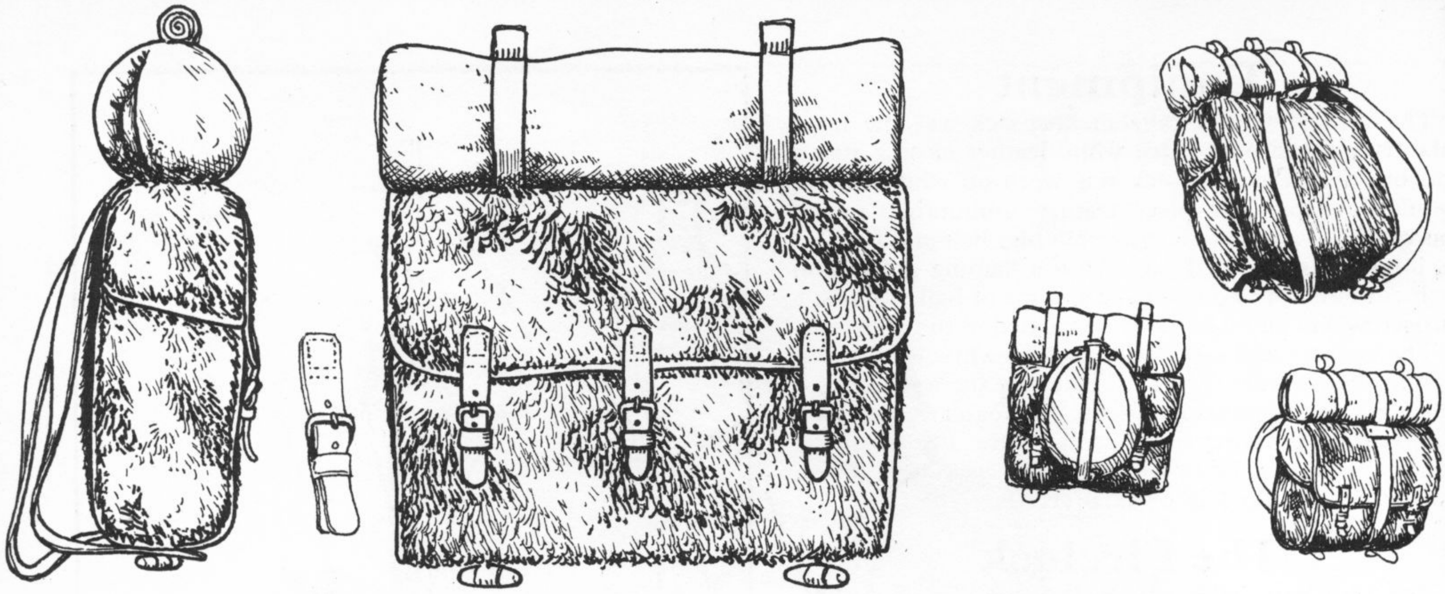
Grenadier's fatigue cap ornament.



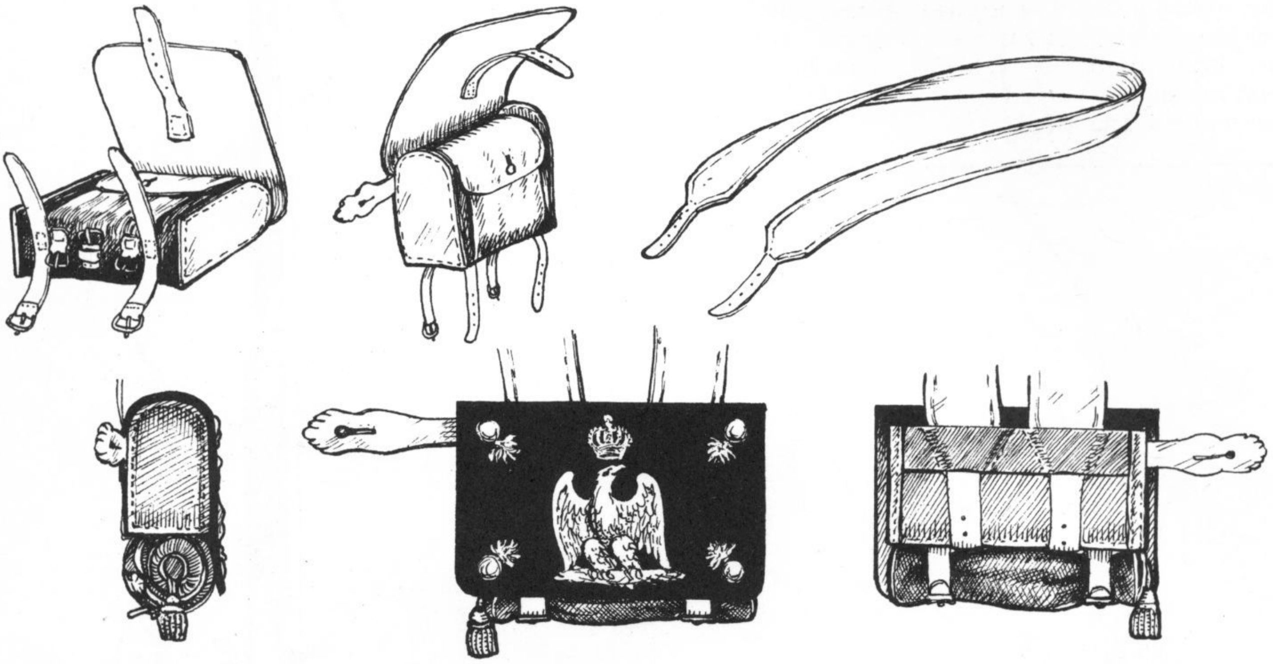
Grenadier officer's gorget, drawn from actual item.



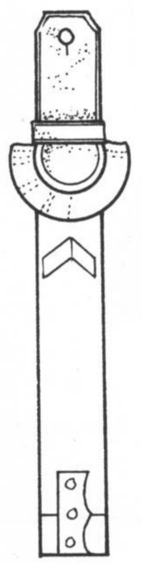
Grenadier's coat.



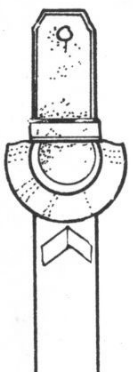
Above: *Knapsack detail, with variations (greatcoat roll is blue).*



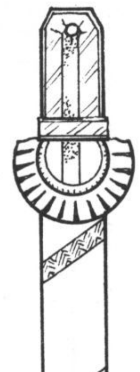
Above: *Cartridge box; copper ornaments. Note forage cap rolled up underneath* (*this was blue with 'Aurore' tassel, gold for NCOs*).



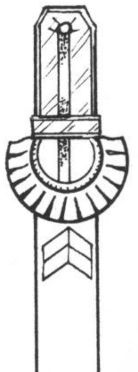
Grenadier.



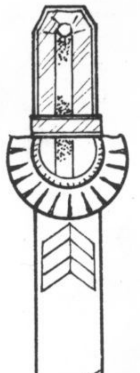
Corporal.



Fourrier.



Sergeant.



Sgt-Major.

Equipment

The normal Guard calfskin knapsack was the large infantry pattern with three white leather closing straps and buckles. The knapsack was worn on white leather shoulder straps. The black leather ammunition pouch was carried on a white leather shoulder belt and bore on its lid a brass crowned eagle with a flaming grenade in each corner. Approximately 60 rounds of ball, 3 flints, a turnscrew and an oil bottle were carried in the pouch.

The bayonet and sabre belt was also white leather.

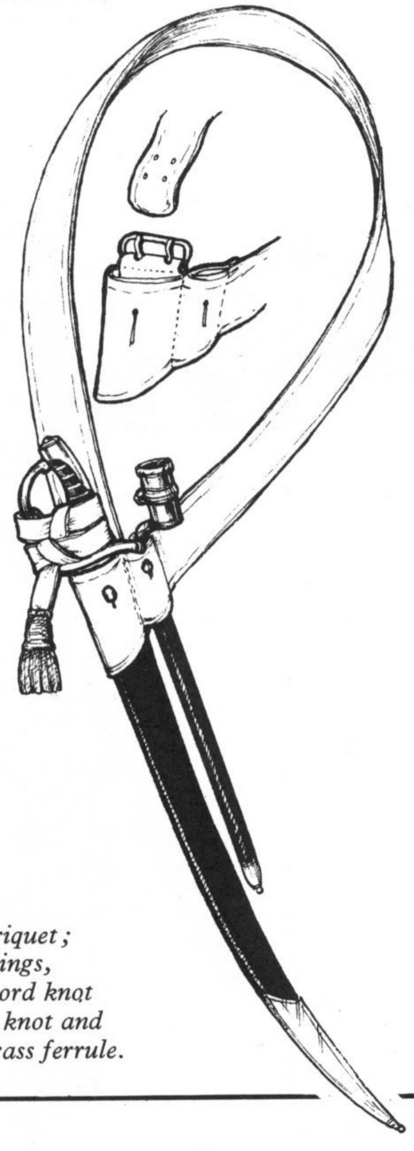
The officers wore the sword belt over the waistcoat for full dress and fastened by a large rectangular gilded belt plate with a flaming grenade in its centre. For undress a lighter, narrower belt with a snake clasp was worn, usually through the falls of the breeches.

The Firelock

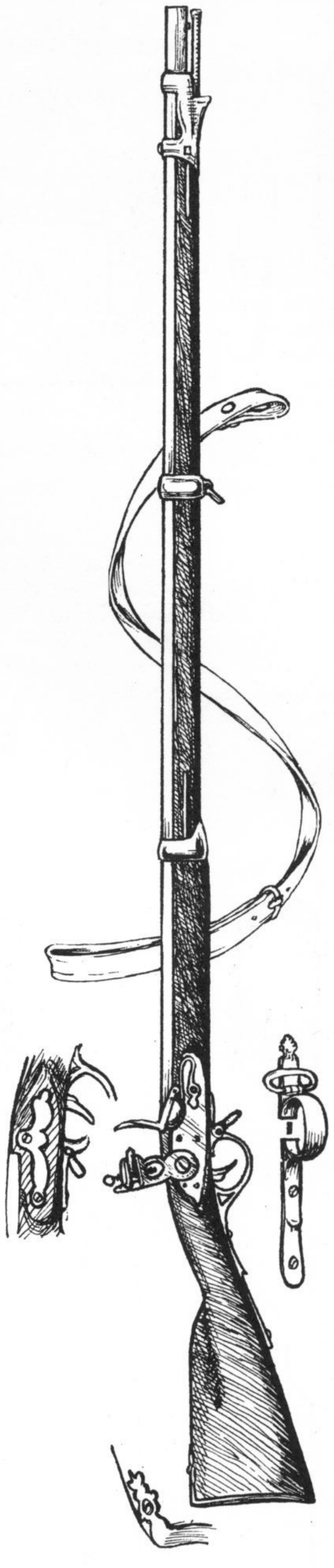
The 1801 pattern musket had all brass mounts. The weapon was approximately 4 ft 2 inches long, weighed just over 9 pounds and had a calibre of 17·1 mm.

Sabre-briquet

This special infantry sword had a blade approximately 65 cm long, a single branch brass guard, and a black leather brass mounted scabbard. The blade of the weapon was slightly curved and the sword knot was white leather with a scarlet wool tassel.



Sabre-briquet; brass fittings, white sword knot with red knot and tassel, brass ferrule.



Guard pattern musket; all fittings are brass and the lock is in steel.

Officers' swords

The officers of the Grenadiers carried sabres with blades approximately 70 cm long and had gilded hilts with intricate single-bar guards. The polished black leather scabbards had deep gilded mounts. Many of the swords appear to have been made to the owners requirements and had richly damascened blades with inscriptions such as 'La Garde Imperiale' and 'Garde Imperiale' or even the name of the regiment. The langets were in some cases silvered with a laurel wreathed Emperor's head.

Undress Uniform

Three items of clothing are important. First is the cocked hat, which on campaign replaced the bearskin in the early years was then officially discarded. As this item appears again for the Waterloo campaign it will be described. The 'surtout' was a simple single breasted frock which was replaced in 1809 by a second 'habit' but continued to be worn by officers and some NCOs until 1815; and the nankeen breeches with stockings worn by officers.

Hat: The 'chapeau' was a bicorne, a broad brimmed felt hat cocked so that it had two flaps, one on the front the other at the back. The two 'flaps' were kept in position by 'passants', cords which passed through holes in these flaps and kept the flaps up taut. The ends of the cords appeared at the ends of the hat as tassels. On the front of the hat, on the left side, was a broad loop of flat braid which retained the cloth tricolour cockade with a small regimental button. The ornament was a carrot-shaped red woollen tuft.

Grenadiers and Corporals: Their hat had 'aurore' cords and tassels, an 'aurore' cockade loop and a brass button.

Sergeants and Sergeant Majors: The hat had scarlet and gold woollen cords and tassels and a similarly coloured cockade loop with a gilt button.

Officers: Gold cords and tassels and a gold cockade loop and button.

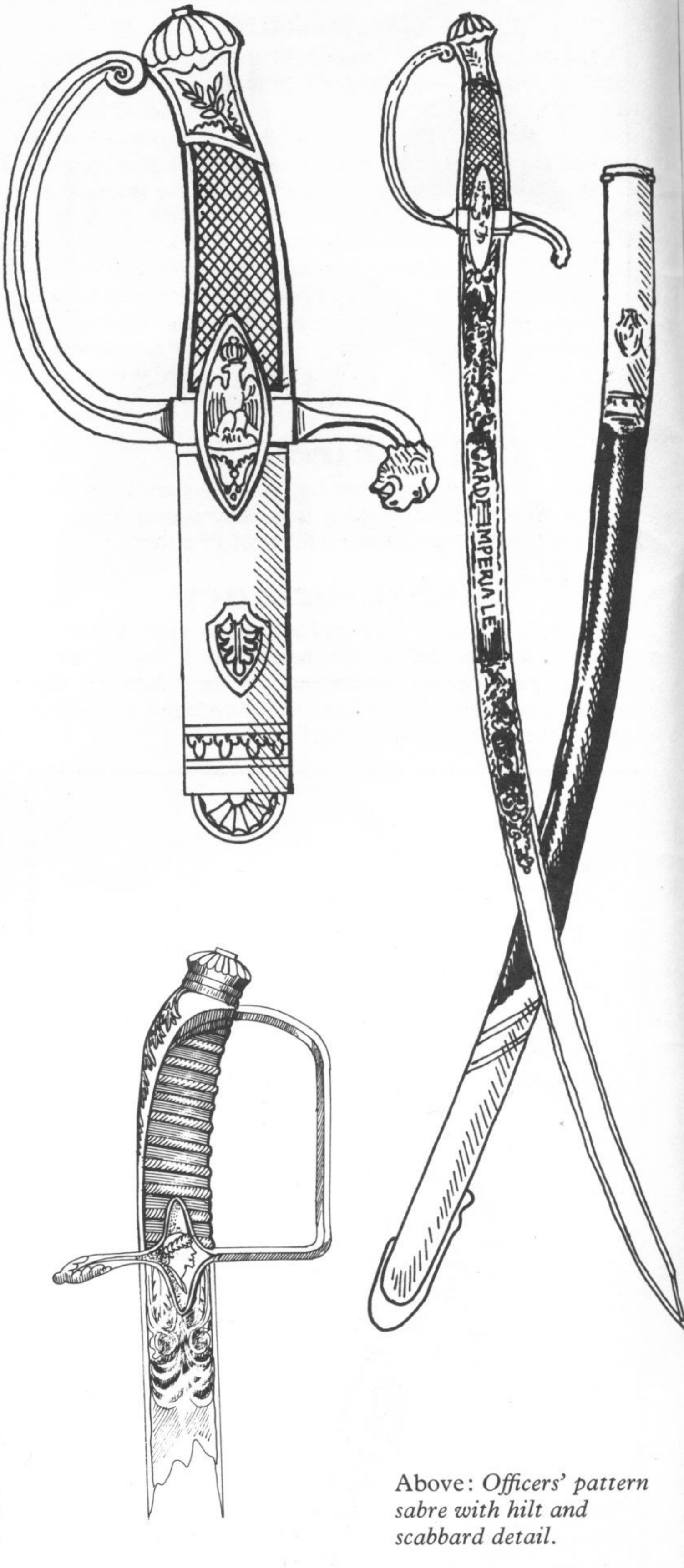
Forage Cap (Bonnet de Police): A blue cap with 'aurore' piping and an 'aurore' braid around the blue turn up. On the end of the tapered crown an 'aurore' tassel. On the front and cut out flaming 'aurore' grenade. NCOs and Drummers had red and gold cord, tassels and braid and a gold grenade. For officers the trimming, tassel, and grenade were all gold.

Frock: A plain blue single-breasted coat with a blue collar and plain blue cuffs with two buttons on the back seam. The turnbacks were red with 'aurore' grenades. Seven, later nine, brass uniform buttons were worn down the front. Worn with the epaulettes, then rank badges were as on the full dress coat.

The officers also wore this pattern coat, usually with nine gilt buttons and with gold grenades on the turnbacks and gold epaulette bridle loops. The coat was replaced by a second 'habit' for the Grenadiers but appears to have been re-introduced for at least some regiments during the Hundred Days.

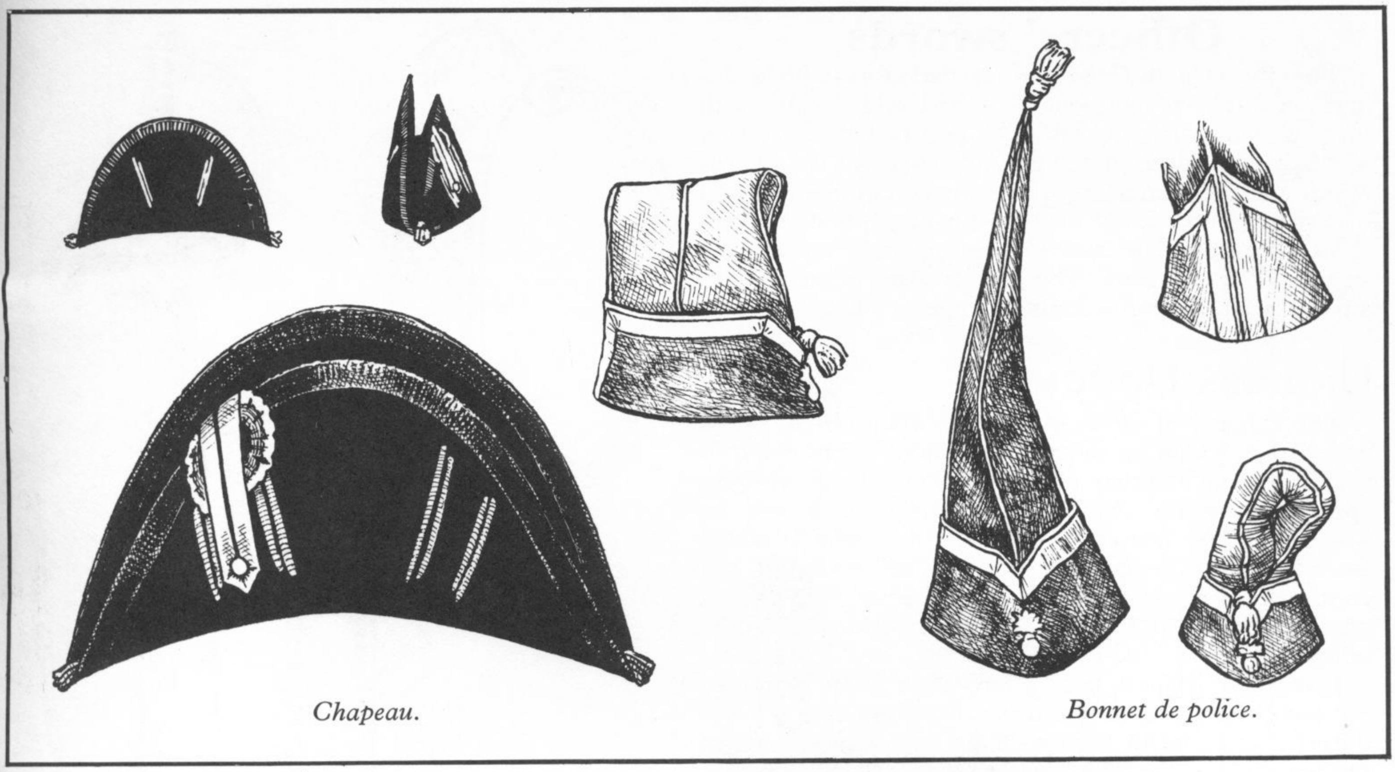
There were of course a great variety of other orders of dress worn by the Corps of Grenadiers and by the Chasseurs during their history. These have not been covered as they have been recorded many times in other works. Sufficient to add that they included:

(1) Tenue de Service.
(2) Tenue de Societe.
(3) Tenue de Campagne.
(4) Tenue de Ville.
(5) Petite Tenue.
(6) Tenue de Sortie.
(7) Tenue d'Inspection.
(8) Tenue de Corvée.
(9) Tenue D'Exercise.
(10) Tenue de Ville en Capotell. Tenue de Sortie D'Hiver, etc.



Above: *Officers' pattern sabre with hilt and scabbard detail.*

Left: *Guard pattern sabre hilt (after Fallou).*



Chapeau.

Bonnet de police.

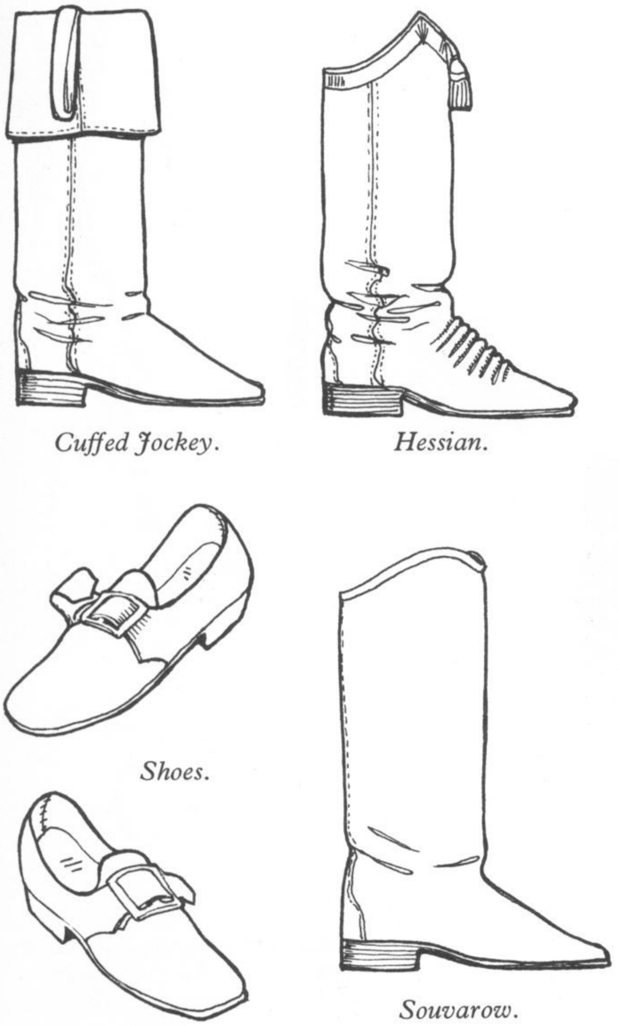
Pioneers (Sapeurs)

The Pioneers wore the bearskin cap the same pattern as worn by the Grenadiers except that the front metal plate was omitted. The cords were a mixture of red and gold wool and the grenade on the red patch was in gold embroidery. The plume was red.

The Pioneer wore the same coat as the Grenadier plus a red and gold braid on the seams, collar, cuffs, lapels, turnbacks, the pocket flaps and turnbacks. The cuff flaps had a similar braid but of a narrower pattern. All the buttonholes had red and gold braid loops called 'Brandenbourgs'. The grenades on the turnbacks were gold embroidery and the epaulettes were the same pattern as the sergeant. On each sleeve, above the elbow, were crossed gold axes on red cloth. The Pioneers wore white aprons and white gauntlet gloves. Commandant Bucquoy indicated that the uniform of the sergeant pioneer followed the same pattern except that the arm badges consisted of crossed gold axes with a gold flaming grenade both above and below them, together with the usual rank distinctions.

The Pioneers wore a similar 'surtout' to the Grenadiers with crossed axes on each upper sleeve and when the second coat was introduced they had gold lace on the collar and cuffs besides the crossed axes. When the cocked hat was worn it had the sergeants distinctions.

The Pioneers wore two shoulder belts and a waist belt. The shoulder belt supporting the special axe case and cartridge box had brass ornaments on the breast comprising a Medusa's Head, a flaming grenade, crossed axes and open oblong buckle with two prongs, a slide, and the tip which comprised an animal's (lion's?) paw with talons in solid brass. The sword/bayonet belt had an oblong buckle, two prongs a slide and a brass crescent tip. The axe case was secured by a curved lid with two straps and buckles and the haft by a smaller lid with one strap and a leather ring stitched in the belt, level with the small of the back. The small cartridge pouch was stitched to the axe case and had brass badges comprising crossed axes, in



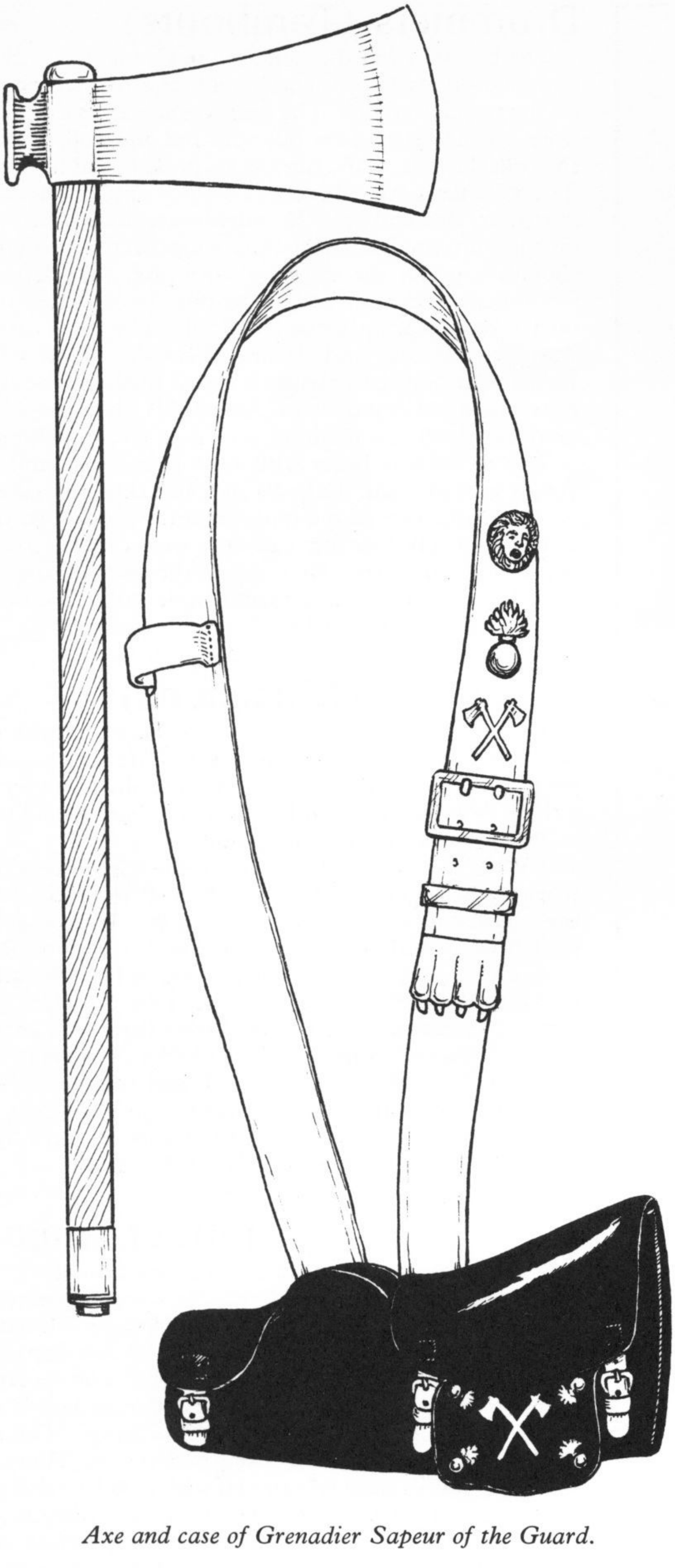
Cuffed Jockey.

Hessian.

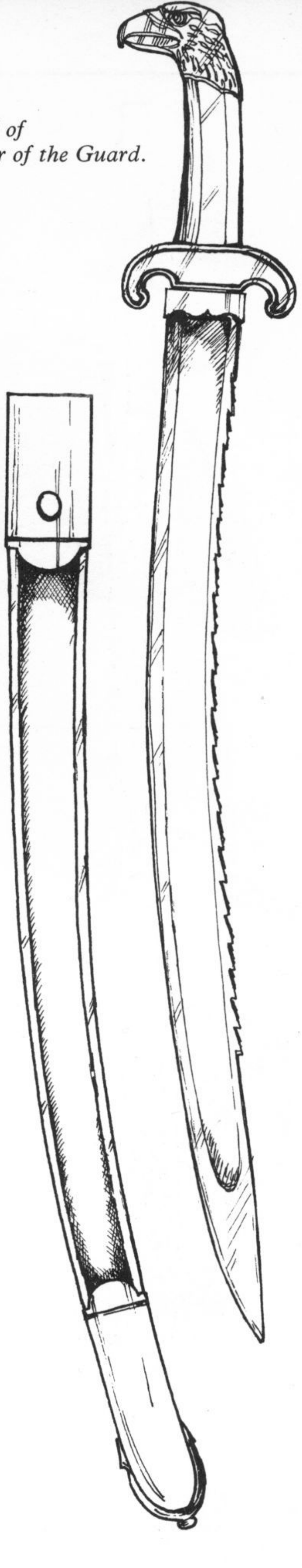
Shoes.

Souvarow.

Types of footwear.



Axe and case of Grenadier Sapeur of the Guard.

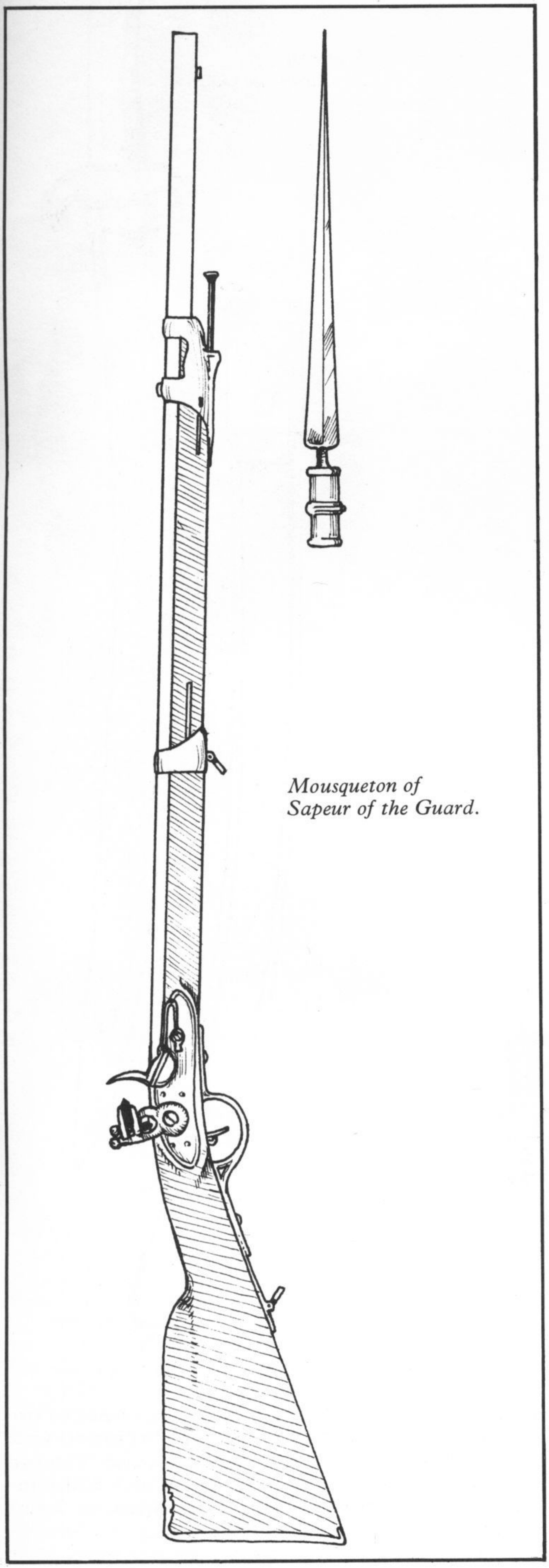


Sword of Sapeur of the Guard.

the centre, with a flaming grenade in each corner.

The Pioneers weapons were the light brass mounted 'mousqueton' which was invariably carried on a sling over one shoulder bandolier style; a cross-hilted heavy sword with a saw-backed blade and a brass grip and guard and either an eagle or cock's head pommel.

The Sergeant Pioneer carried the sword and was also armed with two small pistols which were carried in two loops on the wide leather waistbelt. All the Pioneers wore the waistbelt over the apron bar under the coat. This had a solid brass buckle over the stomach with a flaming grenade in its centre. The Pioneers carried the same calfskin knapsack as the Grenadiers.



Mousqueton of Sapeur of the Guard.

Drummers (Tambours)

The bearskin was the same as the Grenadiers with red and gold knotted cords and a gold embroidered grenade on the red cloth patch. The coat was also the same as that worn on the Grenadiers but with red and gold braid on the collar, lapels, cuffs, turnbacks, pockets and the seams. The cuff flaps were bordered with a similar braid but narrower. Red and gold 'Brandenbourg' loops were worn on the buttonholes. Until 1808 wings were worn on the shoulders under the epaulettes but after that date they were dispensed with and thereafter the shoulder ornaments were sergeant's epaulettes only. The drum carriage was white leather and decorated on the breast with a rectangular brass plate with two brass tubes for the ebony brass mounted drum sticks. Above this plate was a brass grenade which is sometimes shown on a red cloth patch.

The drum was brass with blue rims. The rims had yellow grenades and the brass shell had three grenades on it. The remainder of the uniform corresponded with the Grenadiers. The 'surtout' was worn with a gold lace on the collar and cuffs and later when the second coat was introduced this had a similar simple gold lace on the collar, cuffs and turnbacks.

Musicians (Musiciens)

The head-dress was the cocked hat bordered with gold lace and with gold cords and tassels. The interior of the hat was decorated with scarlet and white plumes in vertical stripes. A white plume with a panache of scarlet and white ostrich plumes was worn for parade.

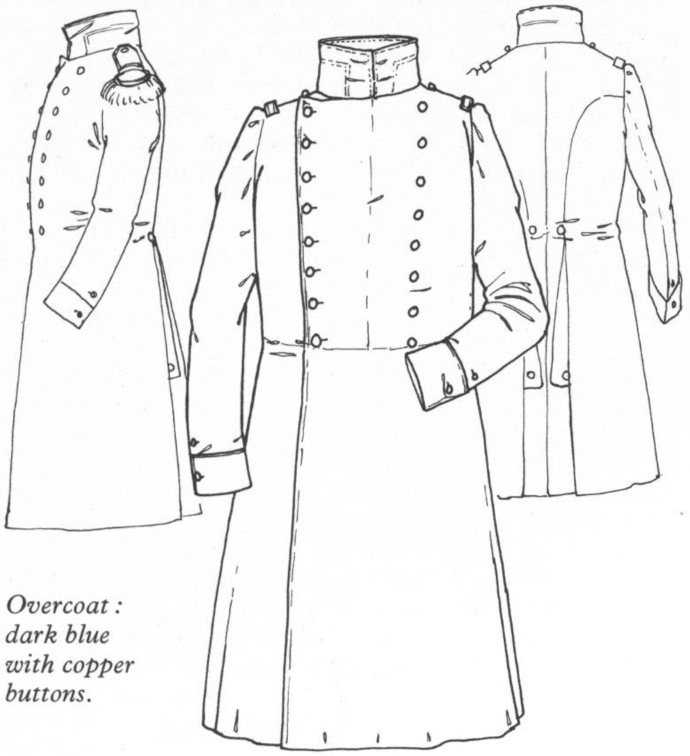
The coat was the same cut as the Grenadiers with scarlet lapels, collar, cuffs, cuff flaps and turnbacks (in the early years the facings were crimson). All the scarlet facings were bordered in broad gold lace. The buttonholes were decorated with gold lace loops with rich bullion tassels and there were gold grenades set on white cloth patches on each turnback. The pocket flaps were entirely outlined in scarlet piping. The shoulder ornaments were gold lace 'trefoils' on scarlet cloth and the bridles were gold. All the buttons were gilded. The waistcoat and breeches were white face cloth and the boots were cuffed jockey boots. The sabre knot was gold and red.

Drum Major (Tambour-Major)

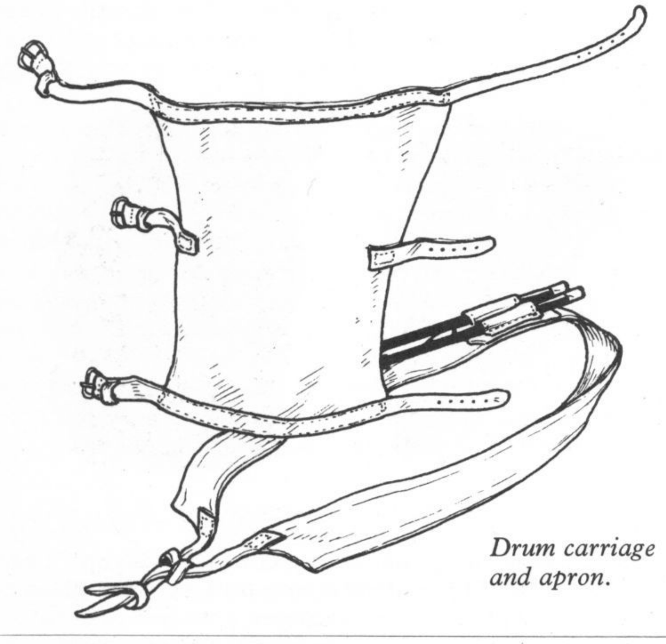
The uniform was extremely rich for full dress. The coat, which was cut like the Grenadiers, was decorated on all the seams with flat and scalloped gold lace. The collar, the lapels, the cuffs and all round the pocket flaps were bordered with similar lace. The buttonholes on the lapels, at the waist and on the pockets were all ornamented with rich gold lace loops with thick bullion fringe. The rank distinctions were those of a sergeant major. The white waistcoat was similarly decorated with gold lace along the edges and on the pockets. The Hungarian pattern tight breeches were ornamented with intricate Austrian knots of gold lace on the falls and gold lace down the seams.

The boots were ankle high 'Brodequin' boots with gold lace edging and tasselling. On grand parades before the Emperor red boots were worn. The head-dress was the cocked hat richly laced with gold and with gold lace cords and tassels. The hat was filled with white and red feathers and had a great panache of blue and red feathers with a white aigrette plume above.

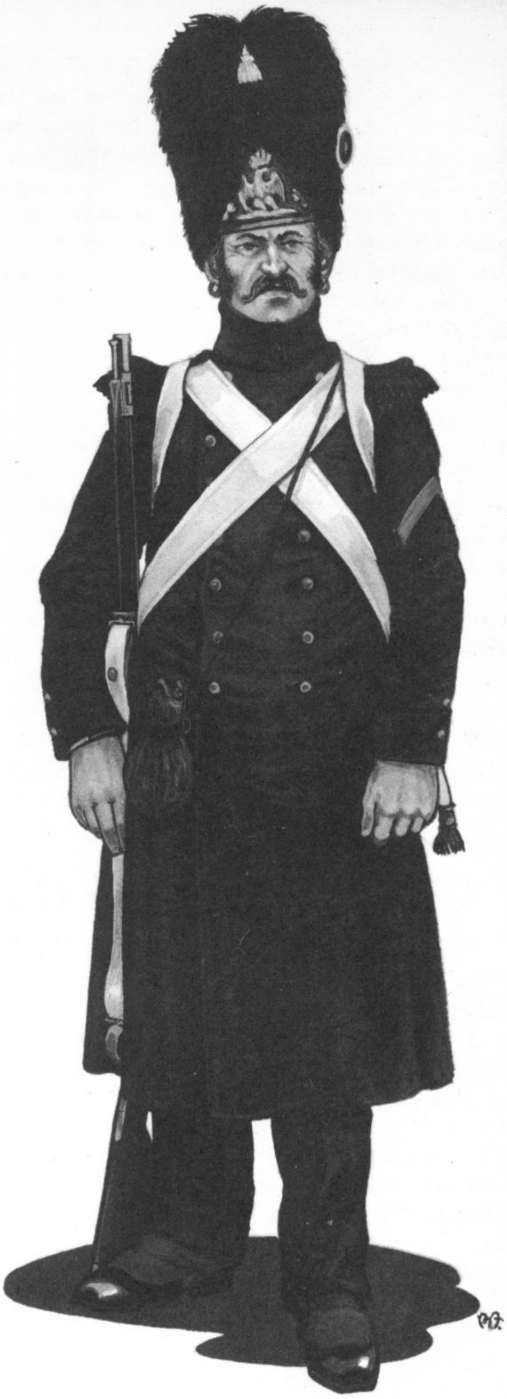
The sash was red velvet edged with gold lace and cord and fringes and ornamented on the front with sprays of



Overcoat: dark blue with copper buttons.



Drum carriage and apron.



Grenadier of 3rd Regiment of Grenadiers à Pied, in overcoat.

palm and laurel in gold lace, a grenade, and a gold plate bearing two little black drum sticks with ivory and silver mounts, and joined by a tiny silver chain. On the back of the sash were two large gold grenades. An officer's sabre was worn in a red leather, gold embellished, sword belt and had the officer's pattern plate over the stomach. The sword knot had a gold strap and bullion tassel. The cane had a silver head ornamented with gold stars and sheafs of arrows, silver chains and a ferrule of the same metal. The gauntlet gloves had gold leaf embroidery around the cuffs.

For undress the Drum Major also wore a much simpler uniform comprising either the plain Grenadiers coat with gold lace only on the collar, cuffs and turnbacks, or the old 'surtout' with similar gold lace trimming and sergeant majors rank distinctions. Simple gold epaulettes and a plain hat with a red plume were worn with this uniform.

The Waterloo Campaign

According to Leon Fallou writing in his 1902 publication 'La Garde Imperiale' the *1st and 2nd Regiments* and a part of the *3rd Regiment* were reasonably well dressed and equipped. He suggests that the 4th Regiment were dressed in a bizarre fashion. Lachouque states that the Old Guard infantry were not much better dressed and equipped than the Young Guard. He points out that the uniforms of the *1st and 2nd Regiments* were correct in that they wore the bearskin bonnet, and had the half belted overcoats, blue trousers, and the large Guard pattern knapsacks with three straps besides the sabre-briquet of the Guard pattern. However, the *3rd Regiment* were not so uniformly dressed. Many wore the Young Guard pattern shako, others wore the bicorne with its 'aurore' coloured cords and tassels and the red carrot shaped pompon. Where these were not available the bonnet de police was worn. The *1st and 2nd Regiments* carried the brass-mounted Guard musket but many of the *3rd Regiment* carried the iron mounted line pattern with many types of improvised slings. The knapsacks of some of the *3rd Regiment* had non regulation pattern shoulder straps and water canteens consisted of several diverse patterns including British captured types and even metal Prussian pattern water bottles and natural gourds of several types. The musket slings were in some cases of string and in other cases twisted cords of tricolour colours. In the 3rd and 4th Regiments the overcoats may have not all been uniform in colour some being the line infantry pattern in grey or even beige. The shakos, when worn, were often covered in oilskin cloth or were even made in pasteboard with the Young Guard pattern Eagle plate with either the crescent beneath or the more usual oblong supporting plate with the number of the regiment.

The *4th Regiment* although ostensibly of two battalions could never muster that strength and went on campaign with only a few hundred men. According to Commandant Bucquoy and a friendly memo from M. Bouteaud, a major collector and an authority on the period, the regiment wore many different types of uniform including the bearskin bonnet with or without the plume and cords. Some wore the Chasseur type of bonnet without the front plate, and many more the Young Guard shako. The uniforms consisted of the full dress coat, surtouts which were taken from stores in Paris and Orleans, and the Young Guard pattern habit-veste. Line muskets were carried with or without slings and most of the men wore the smaller line type knapsack with only two closing straps. Some are said to have worn the Provincial National Guard uniform.

According to P. Benigni (writing to P. W. Reynolds) most of the officers wore proper full dress uniform with the long tailed habit and the bearskin but where these were not available the Young Guard pattern shako with the black velvet band around the rim and the eagle plate were worn. In some cases the shako was discarded for the cocked hat, in which case it was worn fore and aft to facilitate wielding of the sword.

Many of the élite troops felt dishonoured because they could not procure the full complement of uniform items which they expected as 'Old Guard' troops. Lachouque records for example that the Drum Major of the Grenadiers complained that he could not procure a full dress hat. Although the hatter was ordered to produce one for him in twenty-four hours one can imagine that in general the uniform on the day of mobilisation would have left much to be desired.

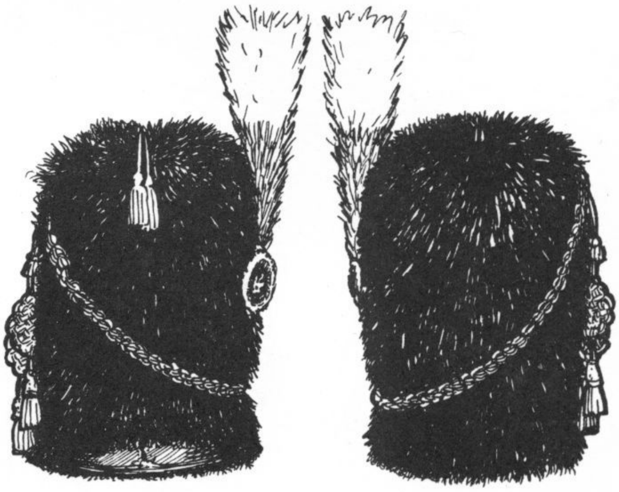
Chasseurs of the Guard: Grande Uniforme

Bearskin Cap: The cap was made of a stiffened carcass of dark brown bearskin but had no plate on the front nor a red cloth patch at the rear. The knotted white cords and 'raquettes' were almost identical to those of the Grenadier but the method of fastening it was slightly different. Instead of the red plume the Chasseurs had a green plume with a red tip. Their sergeant majors and sergeants had green and gold cords and the officers had gold cords and a rather higher cap and feather. Officers on the staff of the Corps had a white aigrette.

Uniform Coat: Known as the 'Habit' the garment was made in 'Imperial Blue' with a collar of the same colour as the coat, white lapels but with pointed bottoms, red pointed cuffs piped white, vertical red piped pocket flaps, and red turnbacks. The epaulette bridles were red and the turnback ornaments on each skirt consisted of an 'aurore' grenade and a bugle-horn. In each case the grenade was on the outside the bugle-horns being on the inside where the two skirt tails met. The buttons were copper with the crowned eagle. On each shoulder of the coat was a red bridle loop for the epaulettes. Each lapel was closed by seven uniform buttons, six at the bottom and one at the top, there were three buttons on each pocket in the skirts, two on each cuff, one on the cuff at the rear seam and one above it but on the sleeve and two at the junction of the turnbacks at waist level. Below the lapels were three buttons and holes between the lapel and the beginning of the turnbacks.

Epaulettes: These shoulder ornaments had a green shoulder strap and oval field and a double twisted scarlet crescent and a deep fringe of red twisted woollen cord. The whole epaulette was sewn on a white underlay, passed under the red bridle and retained by a uniform button near the collar.

Long Service Chevrons: These were worn on the left upper arm and consisted of chevrons in 'aurore' wool placed so that the point of the chevron was up. The distinctions for Chasseurs and corporals were as follows:



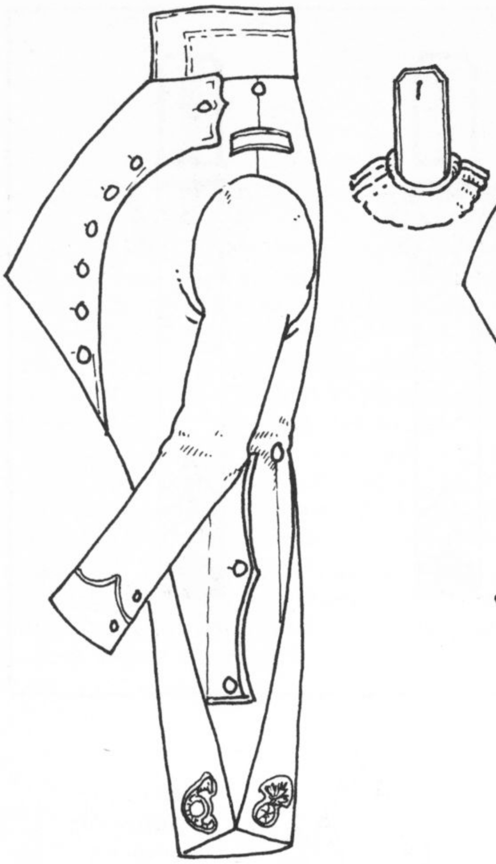
Chasseur bearskin cap.

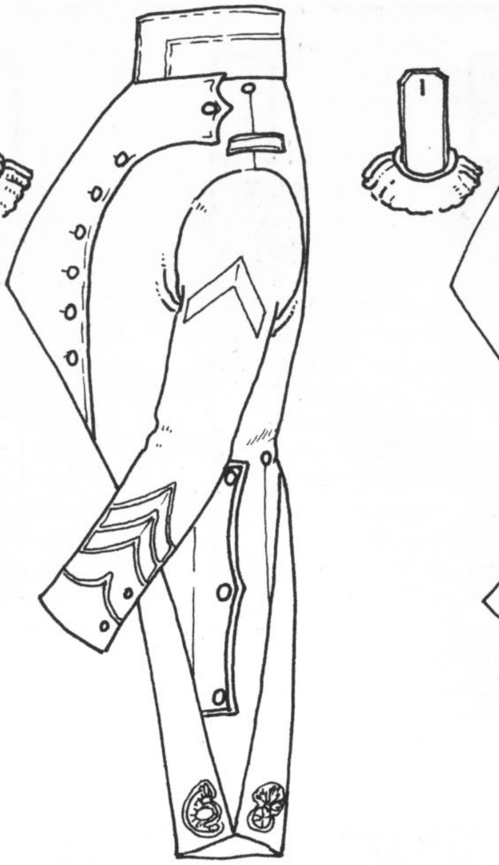
Each ten years of service	– 1 chevron	Sergeants and Sergeant Majors had gold chevrons, sewn on green.
15–20 years' service	– 2 chevrons	
20–25 years' service	– 3 chevrons	

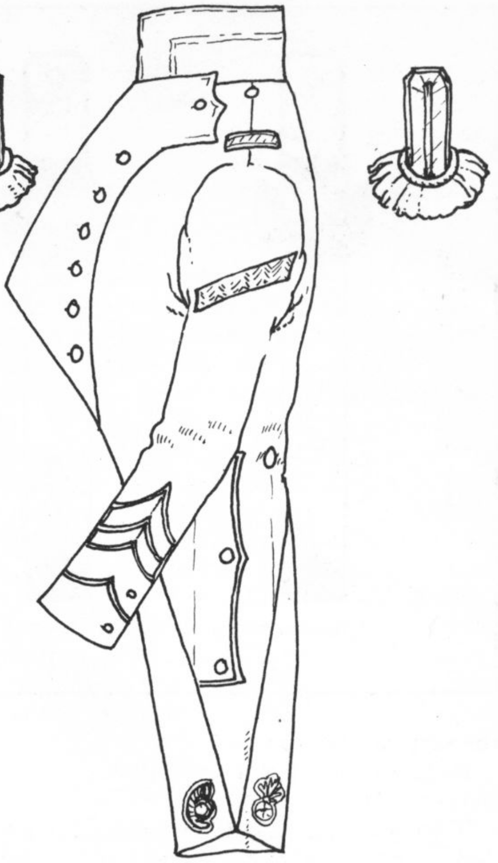
Officers: The coat was the same pattern as that of the Chasseurs but naturally in better quality cloth. The buttons were gilded and the grenades and bugle-horns on the turnbacks were in gold embroidery. On each shoulder there was a gold bridle loop of special design to retain the epaulettes. The same epaulettes were worn as described under the Grenadiers à Pied, except that the field of the crescent bore a gold bugle-horn.

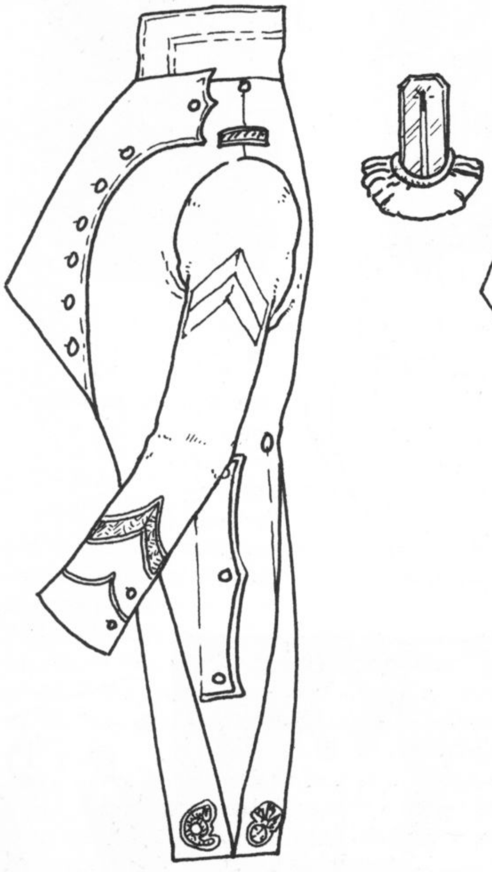
The officers' gorget was gilded and had a silver bugle horn in the centre with a crowned eagle sitting in the ring of the instrument, wings behind its mouthpiece and bell-mouth and a 'heater' shaped shield on its breast, all in silver.

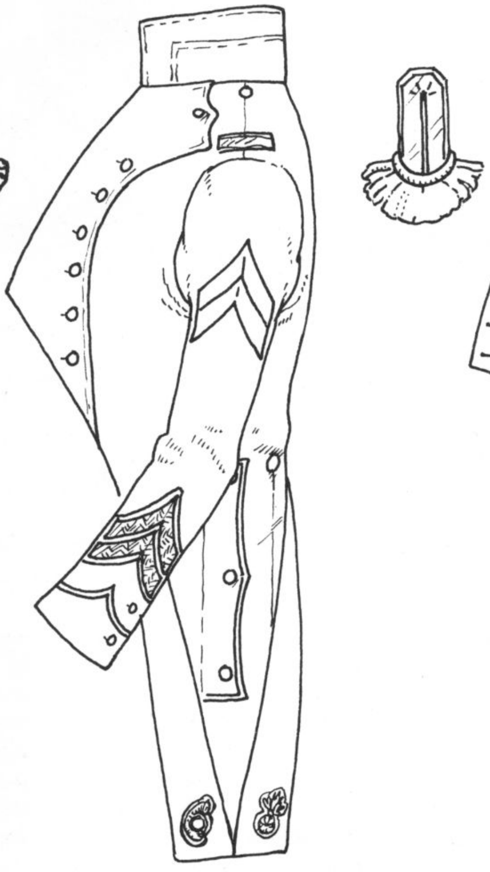
Sergeants and Sergeant Majors: They wore the same coat as the Chasseurs, but in better quality cloth for

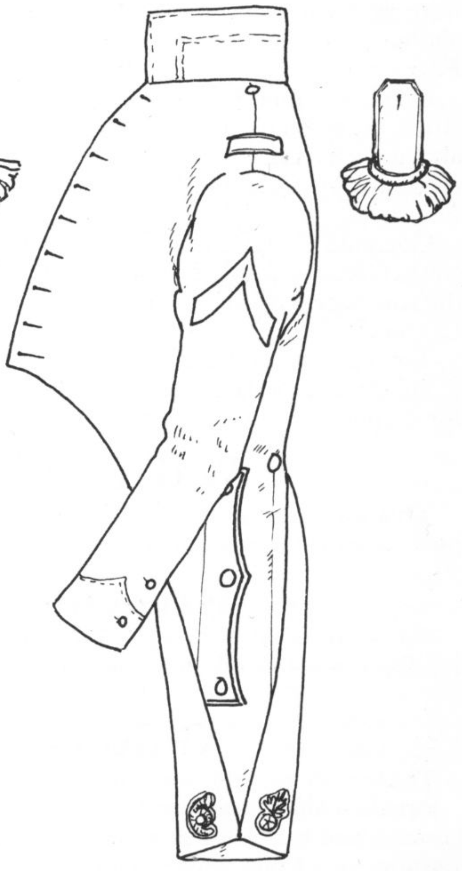

Chasseur.

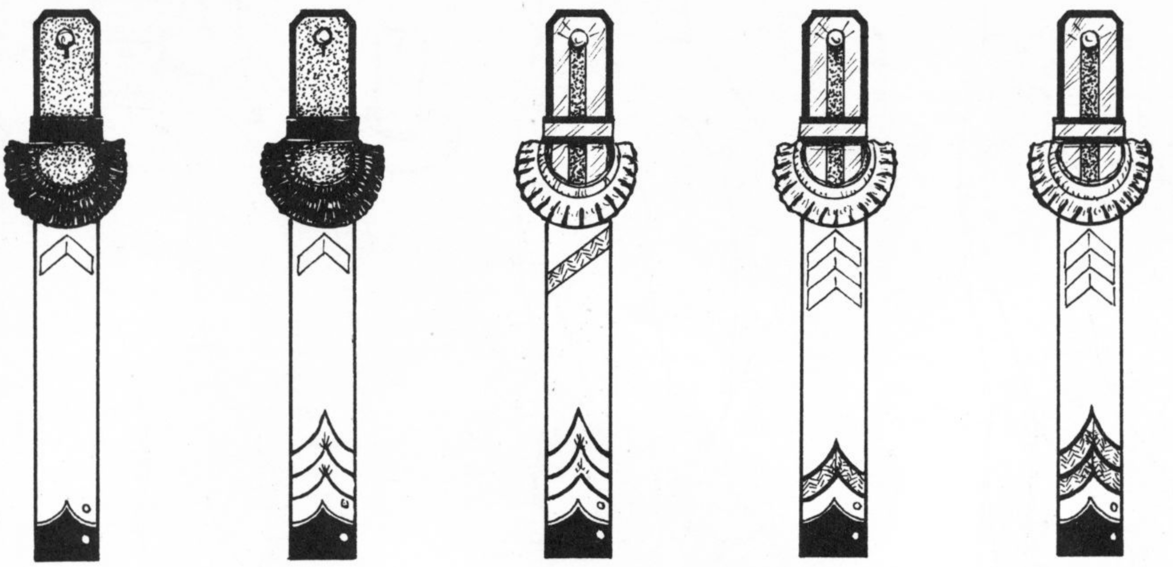

Corporal.


Fourrier.


Sergeant.


Sergeant-Major.


Chasseur (surtout).



Chasseur. Corporal. Fourrier. Sergeant Sgt-Major.

Black = red. Tone = green.

the sergeant majors.

Badges of Rank were as follows:

Sergeant Major

Two chevrons of gold lace placed point up above each cuff all on green cloth. Length of service chevrons also gold and green cloth. The strap part of the epaulettes green and gold in stripes, the crescent gold twisted wire fringe formed of layers of gold and green.

The bearskin cords were also green and gold and there were gold ornaments on the turnbacks. Sword knot green and gold.

Fourrier

One bar of gold lace set obliquely on the arm above the elbow on green cloth. Two chevrons of 'aurore' cloth set above each cuff (as for corporals). Sergeant's bearskin cords and sword knot.

Sergeant

One gold chevron of lace set above each cuff on green cloth. Green and gold bearskin cords. Gold ornaments on the turnbacks. Sword knot green and gold.

Corporal

Two 'aurore' chevrons set above each cuff.

NCOs wore long service chevrons which were 'aurore' for corporals and gold for sergeants and sergeant majors.

Waistcoat

This was white cloth with small brass buttons and two pockets with three pointed flaps set near the lower edge.

Breeches

These were white cloth with a small front fall and reaching to below the knee, as illustrated for Grenadiers.

Gaiters

These were worn in the following styles:

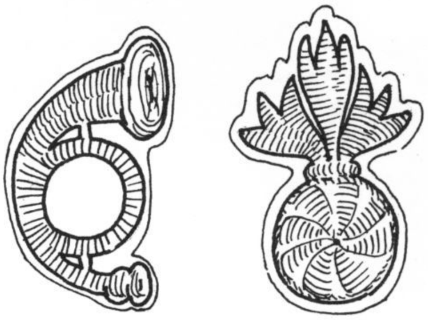
Parade – Long white gaiters with white, cloth covered buttons, and buckled below the knee with white straps.

Summer – Long white gaiters with black buttons.

Winter – Long black woollen gaiters.

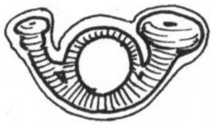
Under Trousers – Grey gaiters.

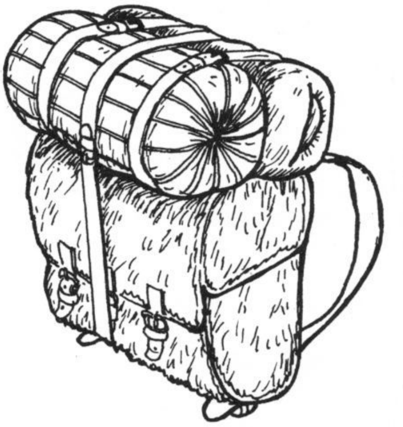
The officers wore white breeches and long white gaiters



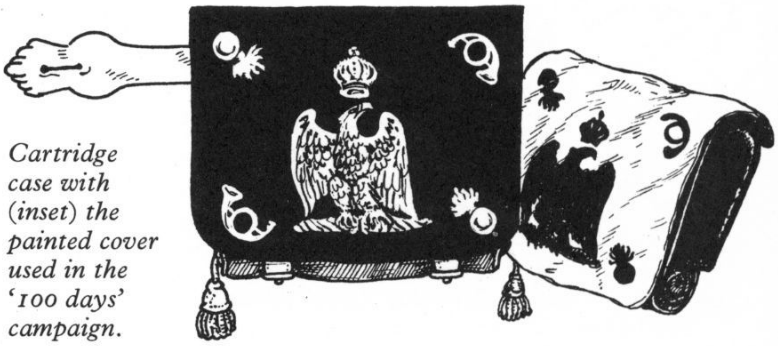
▲ *Chasseur turnback ornaments.*

Chasseur forage cap ornament. ▼

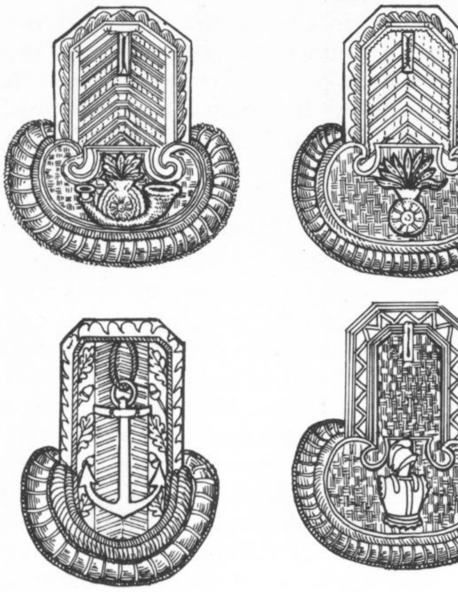




◀ *Knapsack showing method of carrying bearskin in a ticken cover.*



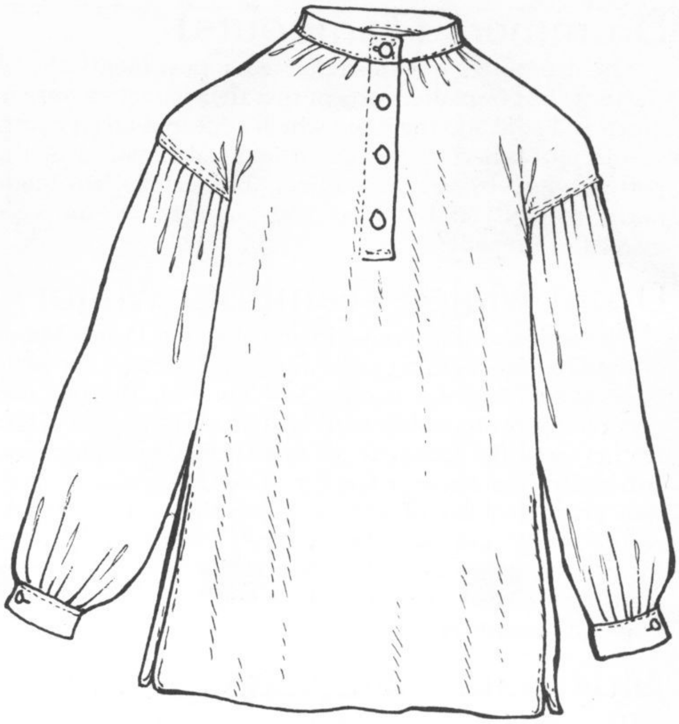
Cartridge case with (inset) the painted cover used in the '100 days' campaign.



Chasseurs. *Grenadiers.*

Sailors. *Engineers.*

Epaulettes.



Fatigue smock.

for grand parades and ceremonial duties around the palace. Otherwise they usually wore white breeches, 'nankeen' in summer with fawn cuffed jockey boots.

Gloves

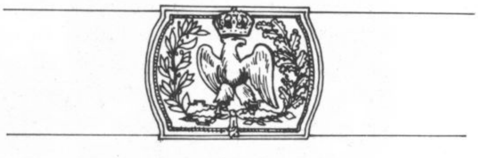
Short white cotton gloves were worn on parade by the NCOs and white doeskin gloves were worn by the officers.

Equipment

The normal Guard calfskin knapsack had three closing straps and buckles. The knapsack was carried on white leather shoulder straps. The black leather ammunition pouch was also carried on a white leather shoulder belt. The pouch ornament was a brass crowned eagle. Approximately 60 rounds of ball, 3 flints, a turnscrew and an oil bottle were carried in the pouch. The bayonet and sabre belt were also in white leather. The officers wore the white leather sword belt over the waistcoat for full dress, fastened by a large rectangular plate, gilded with a bugle horn in its centre. For undress a lighter and narrower white leather belt with a snake clasp was worn through the fall in the breeches.

The Firelock

This was the same 1801 pattern carried by the Grenadiers with all brass mounts. The weapon was approximately 4 ft 2 inches long, weighed just over 9 pounds and had a calibre of 17·1 mm.



Belt-plate for all units of the Imperial Guard.

Sabre-briquet

The infantry sword had a blade approximately 65 cm long, a single branch brass guard, and a black leather, brass mounted, scabbard. The blade of the weapon was slightly curved and the sword knot was white leather with a red knot and green tassel.

Officers' Swords

The officers of the Chasseurs carried sabres with blades approximately 70 cm long and gilded hilts with intricate single-bar guards. The polished black leather scabbards had gilded mounts. Many of the swords appear to have been made to the officers' requirements and had richly damascened blades with inscriptions such as 'la Garde Imperiale' and 'Garde Imperiale' and the name of the regiment. The langets were, in some cases, silvered with a laurel wreathed Emperor's head.

Undress Uniform

The Chasseurs wore the same pattern undress clothing as the Grenadiers except that the surtout and the second coat had the special characteristics of their corps, that is to say, pointed cuffs and grenades and bugle horns on the turnbacks. The hat was the same pattern as worn by the Grenadiers except that for NCOs the cords and tassels were green and gold and the carrot shaped pompons were green. The forage cap was identical except for a bugle-horn instead of the grenade.

Pioneers (Sapeurs)

Generally wore the same distinctions as the Grenadier pioneers except that the gold axes on the arms were on green cloth. Note also that the braid on all parts of the coat was green and gold and that the grenade on the axe case belt was replaced by a brass bugle-horn.

Drummers (Tambours)

The drummers were also dressed almost identically to those of the Grenadiers except that the epaulettes were in green and gold and the braid which appeared on all points of the uniform coat and green and gold instead of the pattern worn by the Grenadiers. The drums had bugle horns painted on the rims and stamped on the case instead of grenades.

Drum Major (Tambour Major)

The uniform was almost identical to the Drum Major of the Grenadiers except that for grand parades the little boots were in green leather and not red, the hat was decorated on the inside with stripes of green and white feathers and the 'panache' of ostrich feathers comprised two green and one red feather. The drum major's sash was green instead of red (some authorities, however, record a red sash) but was decorated with bugle horns instead of grenades. The sword belt was also green leather with gold ornamentations and the cane had gold bugles and stars on its head.

Musicians (Musiciens)

The coat was the same as the Chasseurs but with the collar, lapels, cuffs and turnbacks all bordered with gold lace. The eqaulettes were the same as worn by the Chasseurs except that, the crescents were gold, and the bridles green edged gold. The hat was worn with gold lace edging, garnished along the insides with green and white feathers. The tassels in the ends of the hat were green and gold and the plume was green with a red tip. White breeches, cuffed boots and a white belt supporting a light sword completed the uniform. The sword knot was green and gold. The band also wore a surtout laced with gold on the collar, cuffs and turnbacks and a simple gold lace on the pockets. In winter they wore blue breeches or pantaloons and in summer, on the march, they wore nankeen trousers.

During the Waterloo campaign, of the Chasseurs Regiments only the *1st and 2nd* wore anywhere near full uniform and they would have appeared in the bearskin bonnet and the green and red epaulettes with blue overcoats and blue trousers over their gaiters. As far as the *3rd and 4th Regiments* were concerned a great variety of uniforms were worn.

Many appeared in the bicorne hat, shakos, bonnets without cords or plumes or even the forage cap, beige, grey and brown overcoats and trousers of many hues. The arms were mainly the line infantry type of musket with and without sabre-briquets. Where proper musket slings were not available rope was used.

Colonels-General

The Colonels-General of the Grenadiers and the Chasseurs wore the uniform coat of the corps but, in addition, had General Officers' gold oak leaf embroidery on the collar, cuffs, turnbacks and on the pocket flaps. In the latter case the oak leaf embroidery was wide down the opening edge of the pocket and only one line of leaves down the side of the flap where it was sewn to the coat. The coat was also embroidered with the same oak leaf pattern along the front edges of the coat. The lapels and the cuff flaps remained quite plain. The Colonel-General wore the gold embroidered epaulettes of his rank with silver stars, and a gold aigulette on the right shoulder. The grenades and the bugle-horns (for Chasseurs) were also in gold embroidery.

The waistcoat was white cassimere with gold lace trimming on the fronts and on the pockets. The pantaloons were white doeskin with high polished riding boots and gilded spurs. The hat was usually worn with this uniform the interior filled with white ostrich feathers. The edges of the hat were decorated with gold lace and the cockade loop and button were also gold. From a socket above the cockade a 'panache' of three red feathers were worn surmounted by a white aigrette. The bearskin with gold cords and, for Grenadiers, a gold plate, and a gold grenade on the cloth patch together with a white aigrette could also be worn.

Their horse furniture was dark red velvet and comprised a housing and holster caps all edged with wide gold lace and gold fringes.

The Colonel-Generals carried light cavalry pattern sabres with a gilded chiselled and engraved guard worn in a black polished leather scabbard almost entirely covered with engraved gilt mountings, and a gold sword knot.

The Young Guard

The re-constituted Young Guard had been reasonably equipped by the time the Northern Army marched off for the campaign in Belgium. Attempts had been made to bring them up to strength. According to Fallou each regiment had two battalions each of four companies, each company totalling some 150–200 men including their officers.

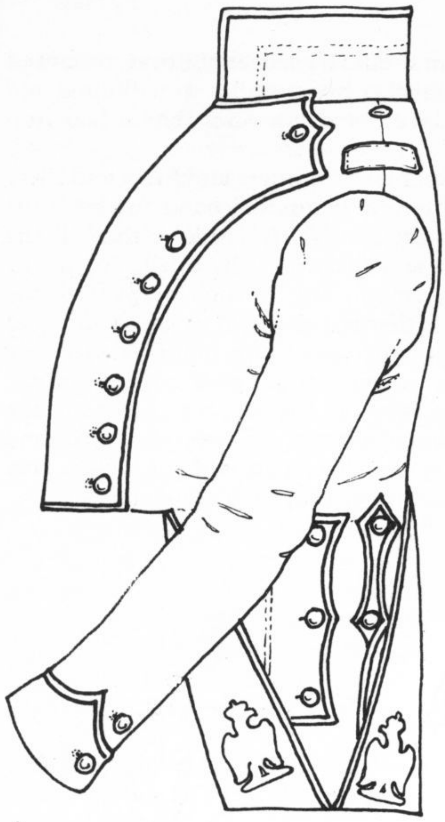
The uniform is uncertain. The following description is what should have been worn.

Tirailleurs

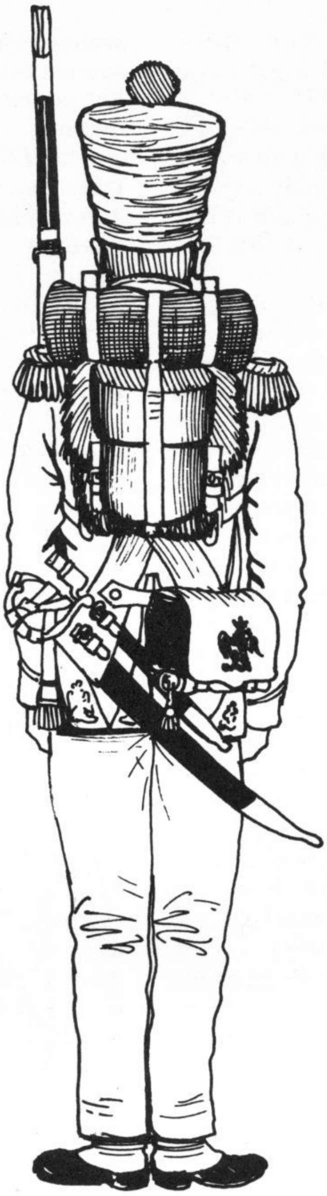
The coat was a blue habit-veste (a coat with short tails which closed across the breast and was cut square at the waist) with seven buttons on each lapel. The coat had a red collar piped blue, red pointed cuffs edged white, and red turnbacks decorated with blue cut-out crowned eagles. The lapels were blue with white piping.

Red fringed epaulettes were worn on the shoulders. The head-dress was a black felt shako strengthened with black leather rims around the top and bottom and with brass chin scales. The shako plate is in some doubt. Many plates were picked up on the field and exhibited in the old Cotton Museum (catalogue in the British Museum) which suggest that the plate was a brass eagle with an oblong tablet beneath it bearing the number of the regiment in the centre. Other patterns were eagles but with the universal crescent-shaped tablet beneath as used by the line infantry with the number of the regiment in the centre of the crescent. The cockade was retained by a small loop of braid and a regimental button and the shako ornament was a red woollen ball pompon.

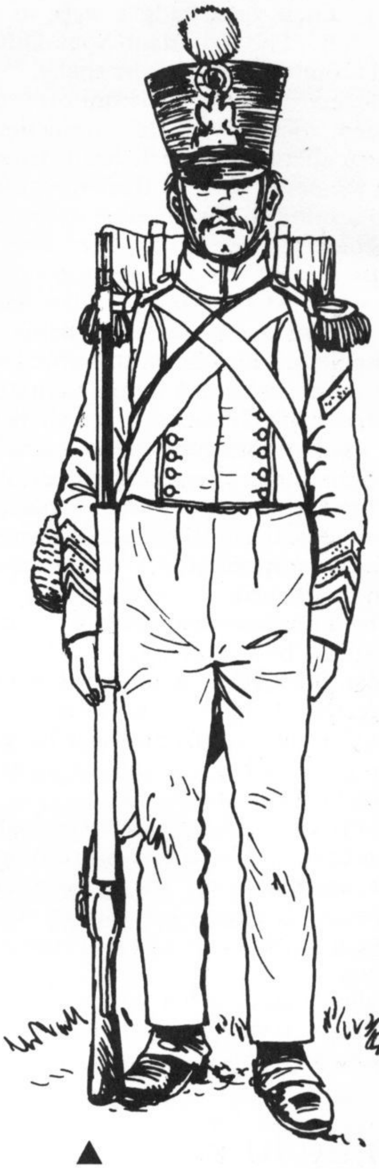
The NCOs probably had epaulettes of the same pattern as the Grenadiers à Pied and had gold eagles on the turn-



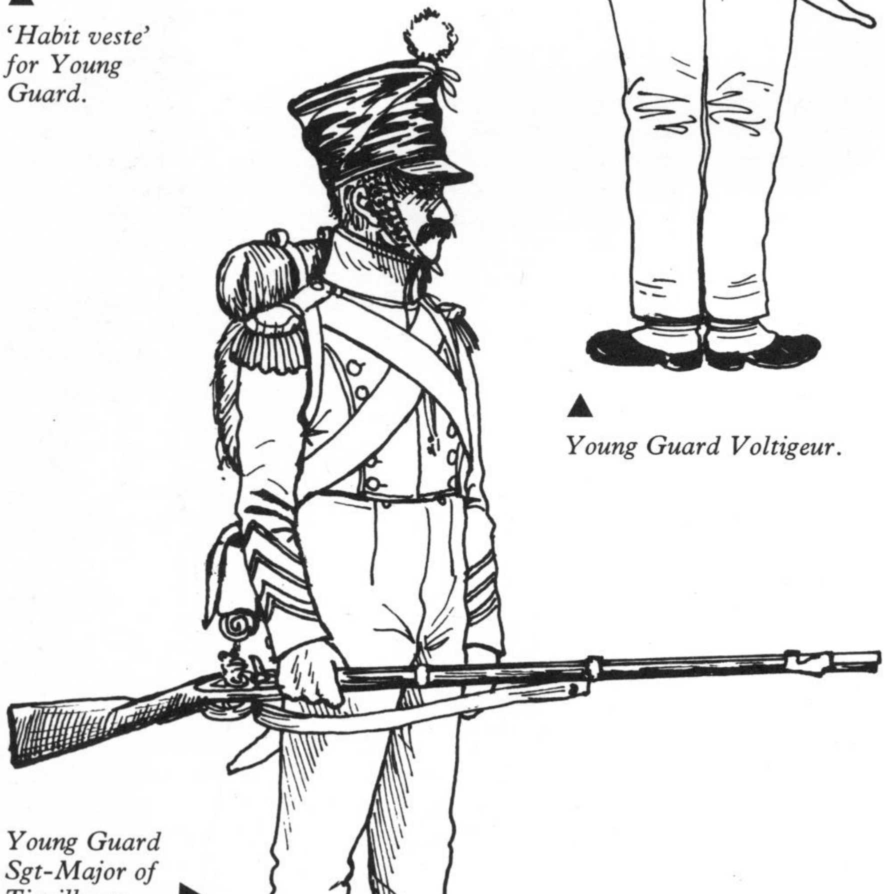
▲
'Habit veste' for Young Guard.



▲
Young Guard Voltigeur.

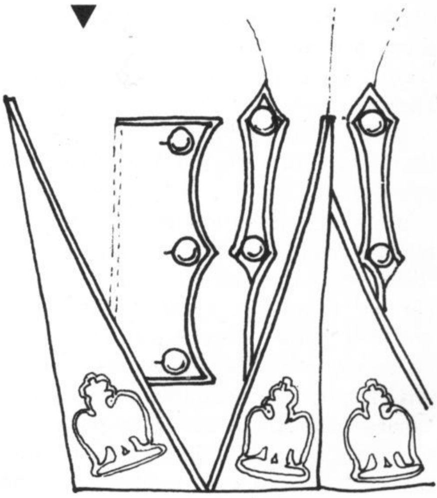


▲
Young Guard Corporal of Tirailleurs.



Young Guard Sgt-Major of Tirailleurs. ▶

Young Guard 'habit veste' turnback and lace detail.
▼



backs. Their rank badges were in chevron form above each cuff. The Adjudant-Sous-Officier had a gold lace band around the top of the shako.

Officers wore the same uniform, or in many cases, the uniform coat only of the Grenadiers à Pied with guard pattern epaulettes. Their head-dress was usually a shako with the same plate as their men but with a black velvet band around the upper edge decorated with gold oak leaf embroidery. Some may have worn the bearskin. The troops carried the ammunition pouch and the bayonet. Some carried the sabre-briquet and some did without. The sword knots were probably those worn by the Grenadiers. The officers attempted to provide themselves with sword belts and sabres to match those worn by the officers of the Grenadiers but where that was not possible they used various types of weapons derived from the line and light infantry regiments. Their sword knots were gold.

The firearm should have been the superior brass mounted guard musket but because of the serious shortage of these weapons many carried the steel mounted line infantry pattern.

The Tirailleurs had drummers and fifers and there was a band but how large and what uniforms were worn is not known. It is likely that all the pioneers, drummers and the musicians of the Young Guard had a uniform form of dress for the campaign, most likely the uniform of the corps plus the red and gold or green and gold braid on all points of the uniform.

Many of the shakes were covered in oilskin or grey or beige covers. The troops wore blue-grey overcoats with their epaulettes on the outside and they carried the knapsack. Instead of white breeches and black gaiters either grey, blue or white trousers were worn over the gaiters.

Fallou suggests that the pioneers wore the Grenadiers' bearskin cap with red and gold cords and red plumes and had the ubiquituous crossed axe badges on their arms.

Voltigeurs

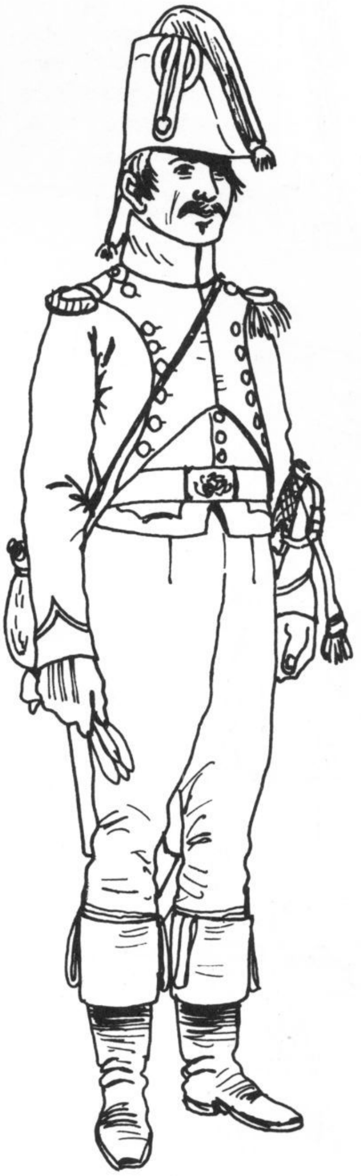
The Voltigeurs of the Young Guard were dressed almost identically to the Tirailleurs. The only differences in the habit-veste were the collar which was yellow edged blue instead of red, the epaulettes which were green with a yellow crescent, and the turnback ornaments which were blue cut-out bugle-horns instead of eagles.

The shakos were the same pattern except that a green woollen ball shaped pompon was worn. The NCOs would have had the same pattern epaulettes as the Chasseurs à Pied and had gold bugle-horns on the turnbacks. Their rank badges would have been in chevron form above each cuff and the Adjudant-Sous-Officier would have been distinguished by the gold lace band around the top of the shako.

The officers wore, in many cases, the uniform coat of the Chasseurs of the Old Guard with Guard pattern epaulettes. Their head-dress was either the shako with a black velvet band around the top edge with gold oak leaf embroidery or the bearskin. The Voltigeurs carried the ammunition pouch and the bayonet, some would have carried the sabre-briquet and some went on campaign without. The sword knots would have been the same as those worn by the Chasseurs.

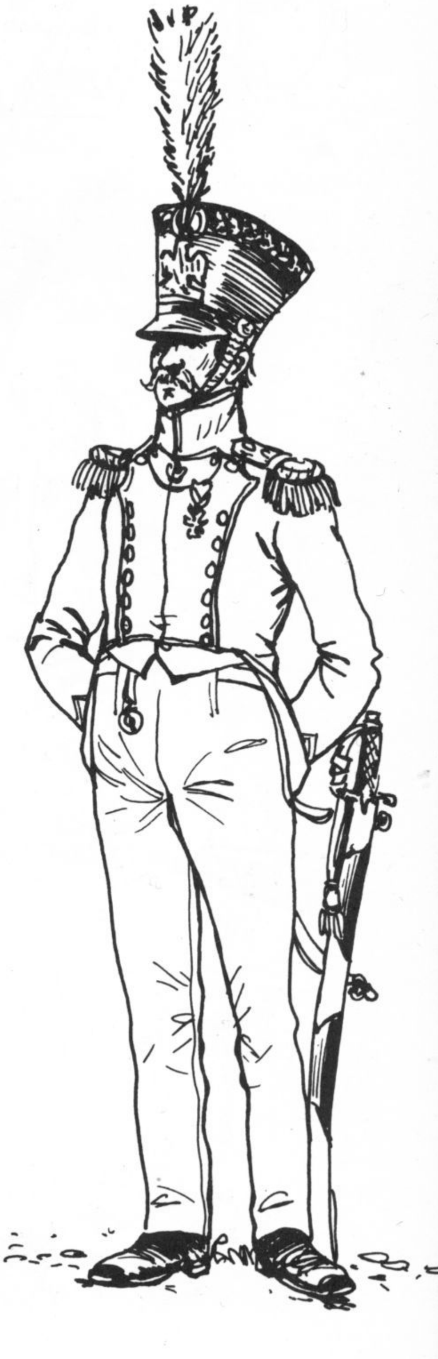
Officers would have worn the same swords as the Chasseurs but with discrepancies where these swords were not available. In that case the officers procured line pattern weapons or utilised any other sword that was available. The firearm should have been the brass mounted and superior guard musket but supplies were limited and line pattern fusils were taken into use. These had iron mounts.

The Voltigeurs also had drummers and fifers and there was a band (probably one combined band for both the Tirailleurs and the Chasseurs). It is likely that all the pioneers, drummers and fifers and the musicians of the Young Guard wore the uniform of their corps with the added decoration of either red and gold or green and gold braid on all points of the coat. The pioneers probably wore the Chasseur bearskin without plate cords or plume and crossed axe badges on the sleeves. Most of the Chasseurs wore shako covers in diverse types and colours and wore grey blue overcoats with dark blue, grey or white jersey trousers over grey or black gaiters.



▲

Young Guard, Lieutenant of Voltigeurs.



Young Guard, Field Officer, Voltigeurs. ▶

Sailors (Marins)[*]

The Marins wore as headgear a black felt shako with a band of 'aurore' braid around the top and bottom rims. A garland of similar colour knotted cord was worn around the cap with pendant 'raquettes' on the right side. The shako plate was a brass eagle with a crown above standing on a thunderbolt before an anchor. Note the cross bar of the anchor shows on either side of the bird's head and that there is a brass representation of rocks or sea shore behind the thunderbolt.

The full dress plume was scarlet with a small pompon at the base. The cockade was worn on the (left) side of the cap with a small loop and a brass button on the lower braid band. There were no chin scales but a black leather chin strap. Shako cover was black. The coat worn for campaign dress was a 'caracot' a blue simple double breasted round coat without tails and with eight brass buttons in each row. The cuffs were pointed with two buttons on the sleeve, one on the cuff and one above. The cuffs were decorated with a broad edging of 'aurore' braid. The collar of the coat was also blue and edged all round with the same braid. On each shoulder a brass scale epaulette without fringe all on red cloth worn through 'aurore' bridle loops. The overcoat was also blue with two rows of brass buttons. The scale epaulettes were worn over this coat.

The equipment was polished black leather and was worn crossed over the shoulder. The pouch belt was carried over the sabre/bayonet belt. On the breast the pouch belt had a brass anchor and the sabre belt a rectangular brass plate with the eagle and anchor. The belt was complicated in that the brass mounted sabre scabbard was suspended on two black slings, and the bayonet was worn behind it in a frog. The ornament on the black leather ammunition pouch was a cut out brass eagle and anchor.

Blue trousers were worn over either black or white gaiters. The lighter pattern calfskin knapsack with two straps was carried and the brass mounted Guard pattern musket had a black leather sling. The sabre had an 'aurore' knot.

The NCOs were titled as follows (army equivalents first):

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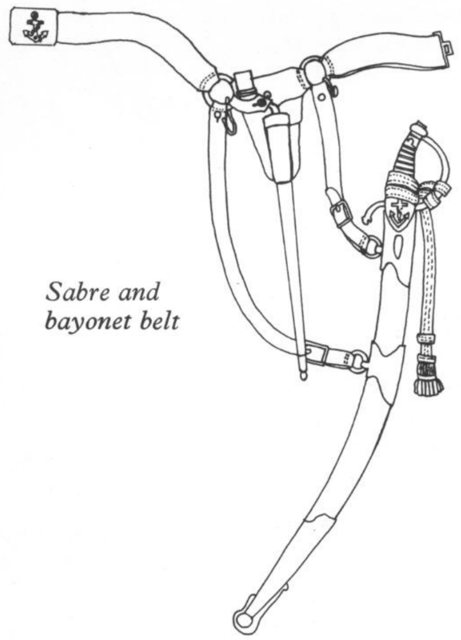
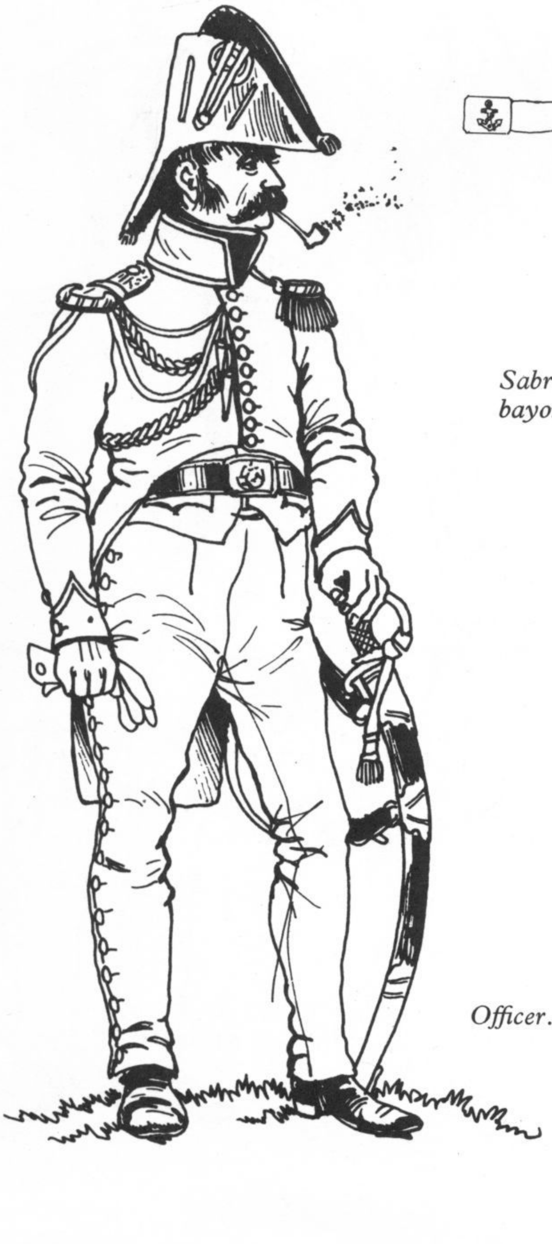
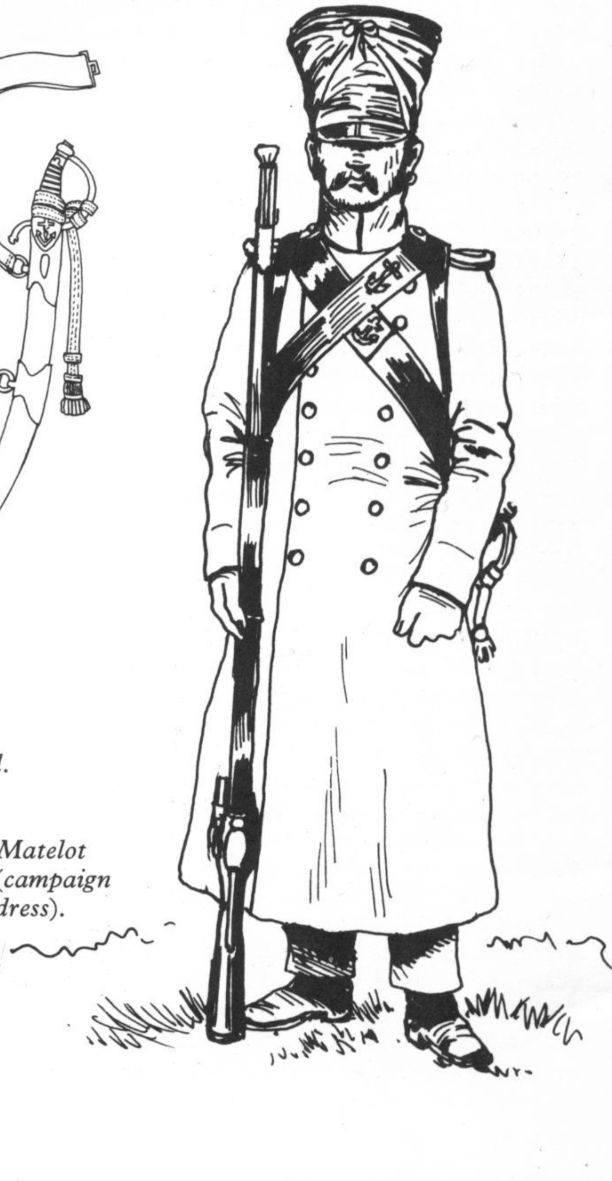
[*] There has always been some dispute as to how this word should be translated. The dictionary states that 'marin' means sailor and that a marine should be 'infanterie de la marin'. Rousselot gives the ordinary private the title 'Matelot'.



Sabre and bayonet belt



Officer.



Matelot (campaign dress).

Sailors of the Guard.

(1) Marchaux des logis chef – Maitre.
(2) Marechaux des logis – Contre-Maitre.
(3) Brigadiers – Quartier Maitre.

For the drummers and trumpeters the undress uniform was the same cut as the marins except that the colour of the uniform was pale blue with similar 'aurore' braid but with no shoulder ornaments. The shako cords were mixed gold and red wool. The sabre was worn as a bandolier, with no pouch, and a red and gold sword knot. The drums were brass with blue rims, quite plain and there was a stamped eagle and anchor on the brass case. The drum carriage was black with a brass plate with loops for the black drum sticks.

The officers wore a simple dark blue frock with one row of nine buttons and pointed cuffs outlined with gold. Gold anchors were worn on the blue turnbacks. Epaulette and contre epaulette had an anchor on the field and a gold aigulette on the right shoulder. There was a white waistcoat. Blue pantaloons or overalls fastened beneath the boots and were decorated down the outsides of the legs with brass buttons. Black leather waistbelt had a gold edging and a rectangular gilt plate with the eagle and anchor. The sabre was in a black leather scabbard with gilt mounts on black slings. The black cocked hat had gold cords and tassels and a large gold cockade loop and button. Probably there was no red plume. The sword knot was gold. White gloves, and a gilt gorget with silver anchor completed the uniform.

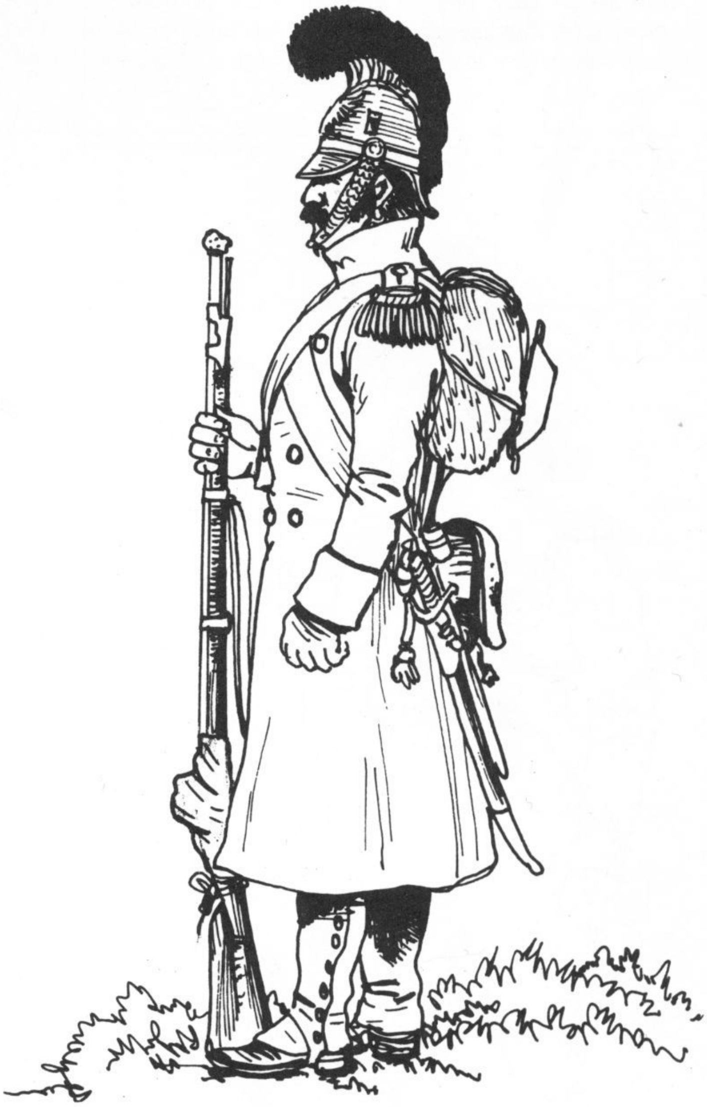
Engineers (Genie)

A very small detachment served at Waterloo comprising one company of pioneers with a small skeleton troop of miners. All their officers were mounted.

The pioneers wore the same coat as the Grenadiers à Pied. The coat was blue, with the lapels, collar, cuffs, and cuff flaps in black velvet with a scarlet piping. The turnbacks were scarlet with blue cut-out flaming grenades sewn on white cloth patches. Red fringed epaulettes were worn. Waistcoat and pantaloons were blue. The buttons were all brass and long white or black gaiters completed the clothing. The original head-dress was a polished steel helmet with a brass comb and chin scales. The helmet had a brass eagle on the front and a large black crest over the comb. There was long red plume worn from a socket above the left-hand side chin scale boss. Arms and equipment as the Grenadier but the pouch had only an eagle plate. The sword knot was red. The pioneers were provided with blue double breasted overcoats.

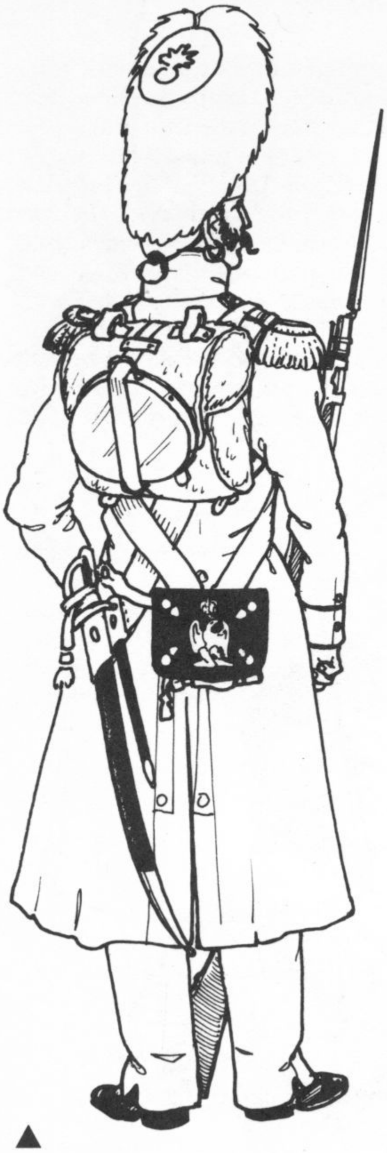
The drummers wore the same uniform plus a gold and red braid on the collar, lapels and cuffs and the cuffs flaps. Turnback grenades in gold and epaulettes as drummers of the Grenadiers. Their helmets had a red crest. The officers wore the same uniform but in better material and wore high black riding boots and spurs and had an aigulette on the right shoulder besides the epaulette and contre-epaulette. The latter had the special device of the helmet and cuirass in the field instead of the grenade. Their gorget also had the same devise in silver instead of a grenade. The miners probably wore the same uniform with the exception that their gaiters were short, black, fashioned in a 'V' at the top and had a red border and tassels. Their belts were white and they had a brass flaming grenade on the pouch lid.

There is great doubt whether the pioneers wore the steel helmet. If not all the troops probably wore black felt shakos with red chevrons on the sides and a band of red around the top and bottom rims and a red knotted garland. The shako would have had a brass eagle plate and may have had a red plume with a black base. Black shako covers may have been carried.

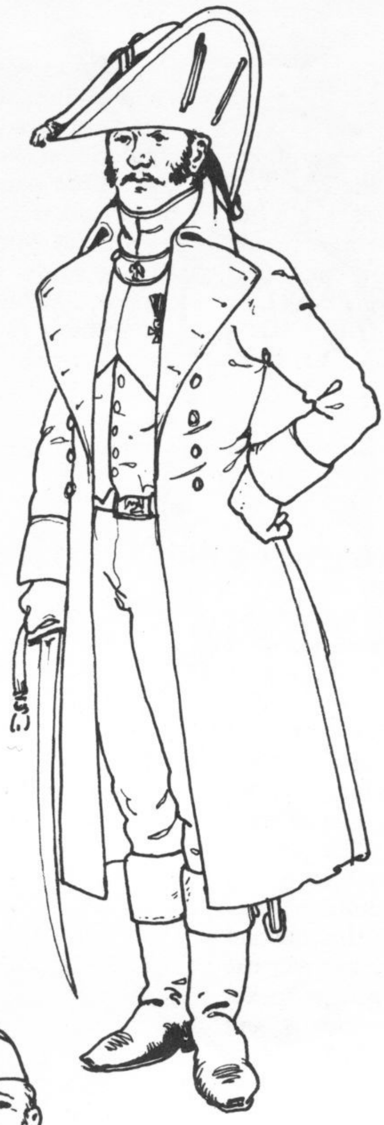


On the following three pages are shown a selection of Grenadiers à Pied, Chasseurs, and Young Guard to illustrate the various ranks in different styles of dress.

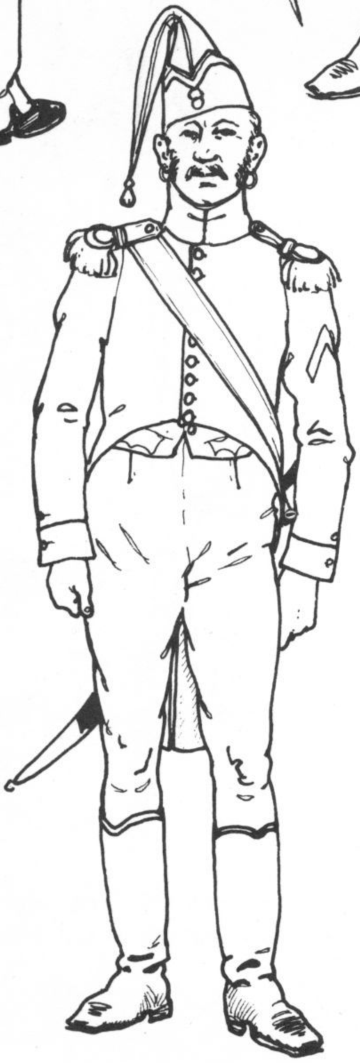
Grenadiers à Pied of the Imperial Guard



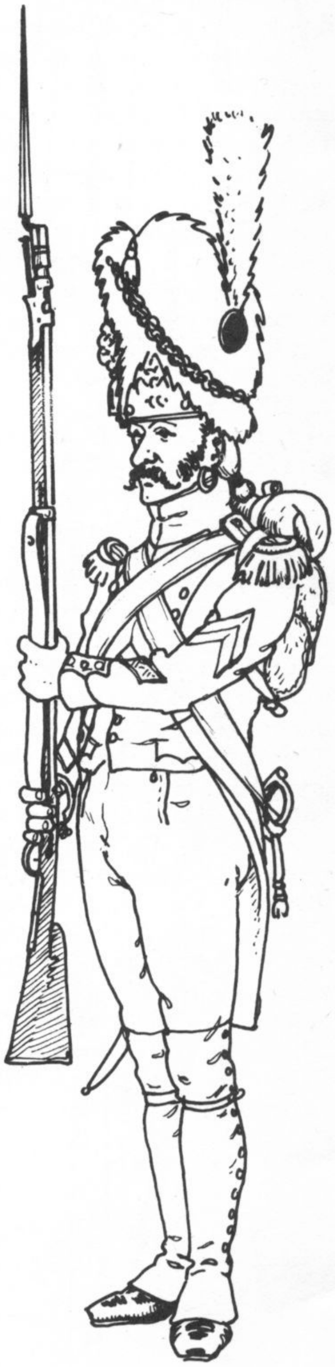
▲ *Grenadier, 1st Regiment, Marching Order.*



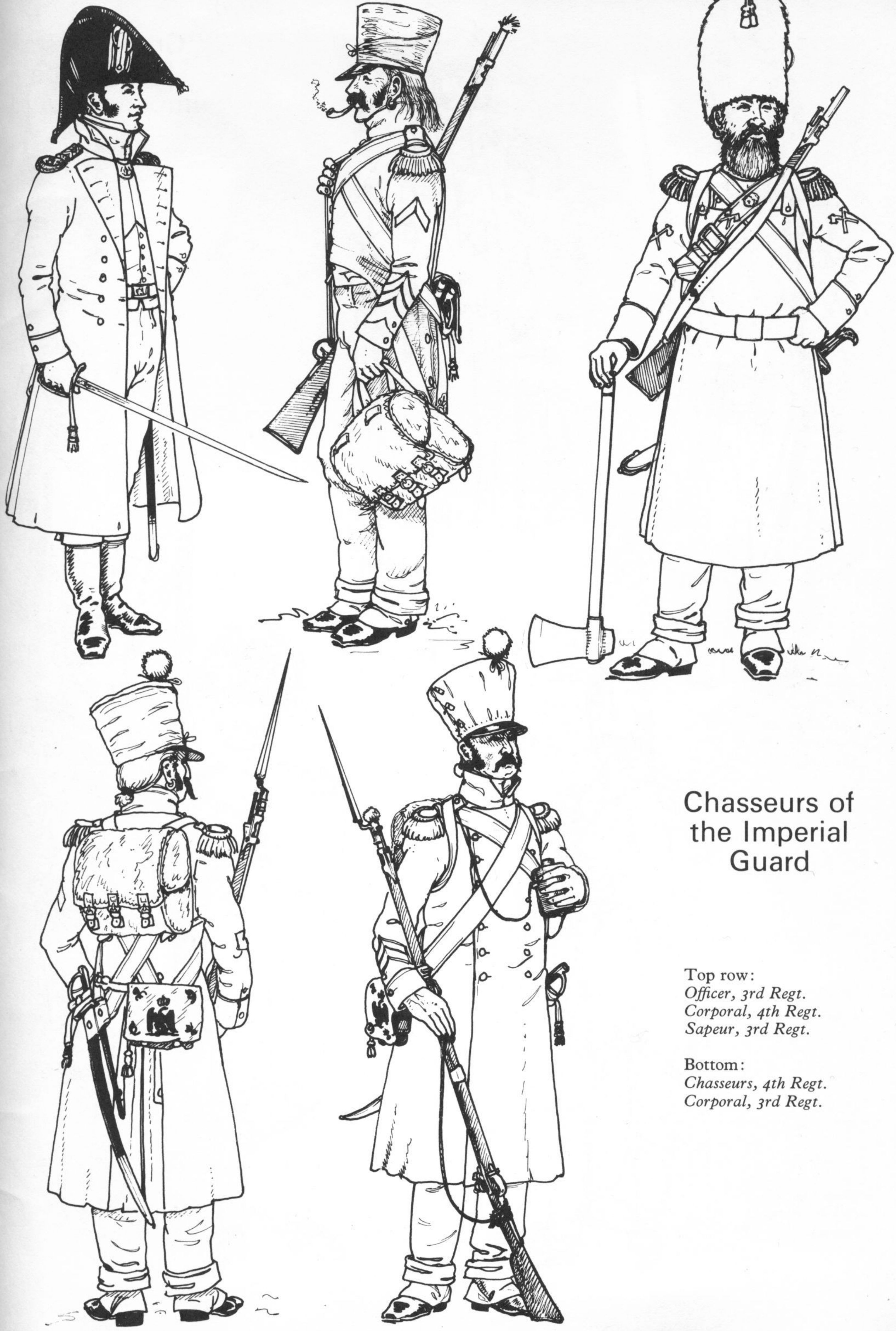
▲ *Officer, 3rd Regiment of Grenadiers.*



Grenadier of Palace Guard, undress. ▶



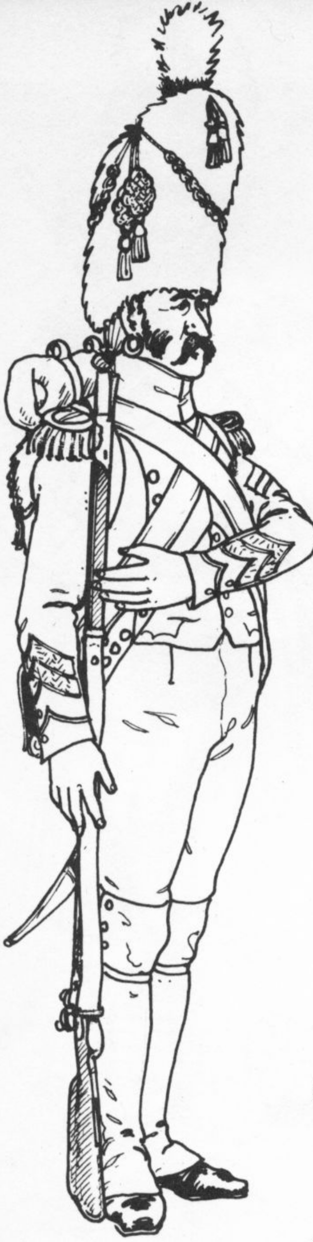
Sergeant-Major, Grand Uniform, Paris. ▶

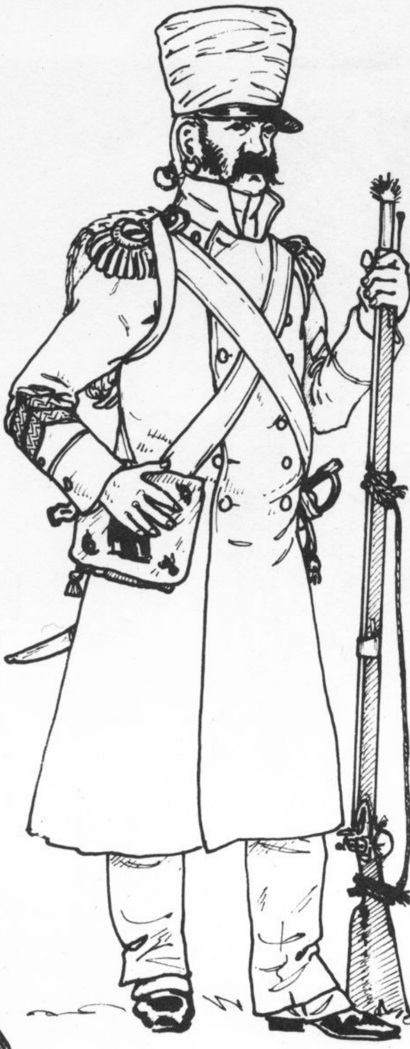


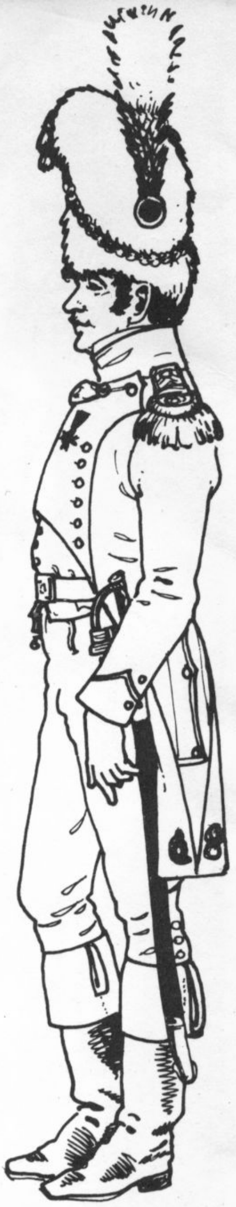
Chasseurs of the Imperial Guard

Top row:
Officer, 3rd Regt.
Corporal, 4th Regt.
Sapeur, 3rd Regt.

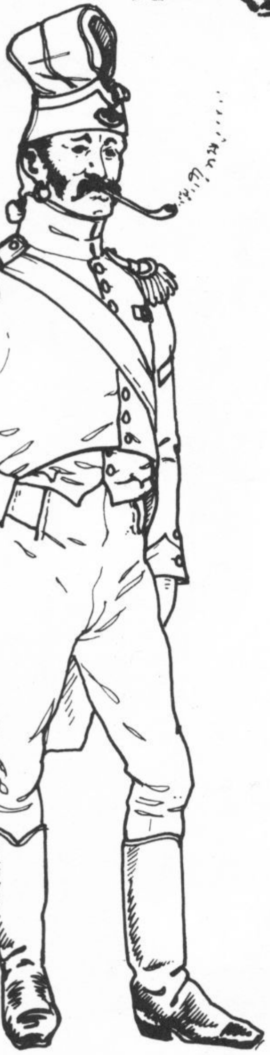
Bottom:
Chasseurs, 4th Regt.
Corporal, 3rd Regt.

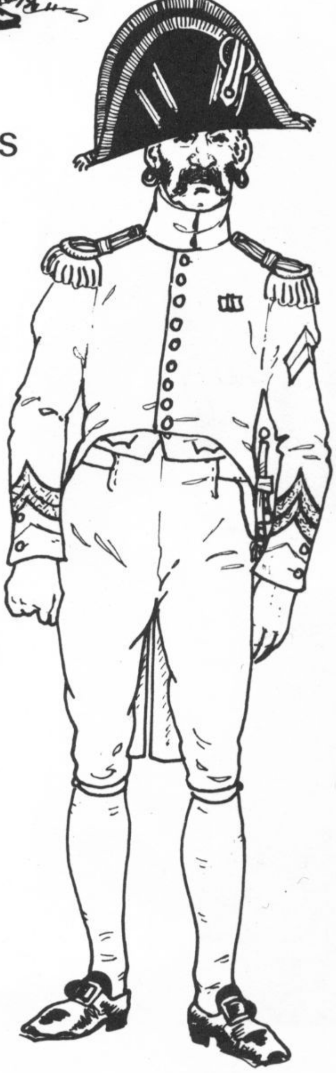






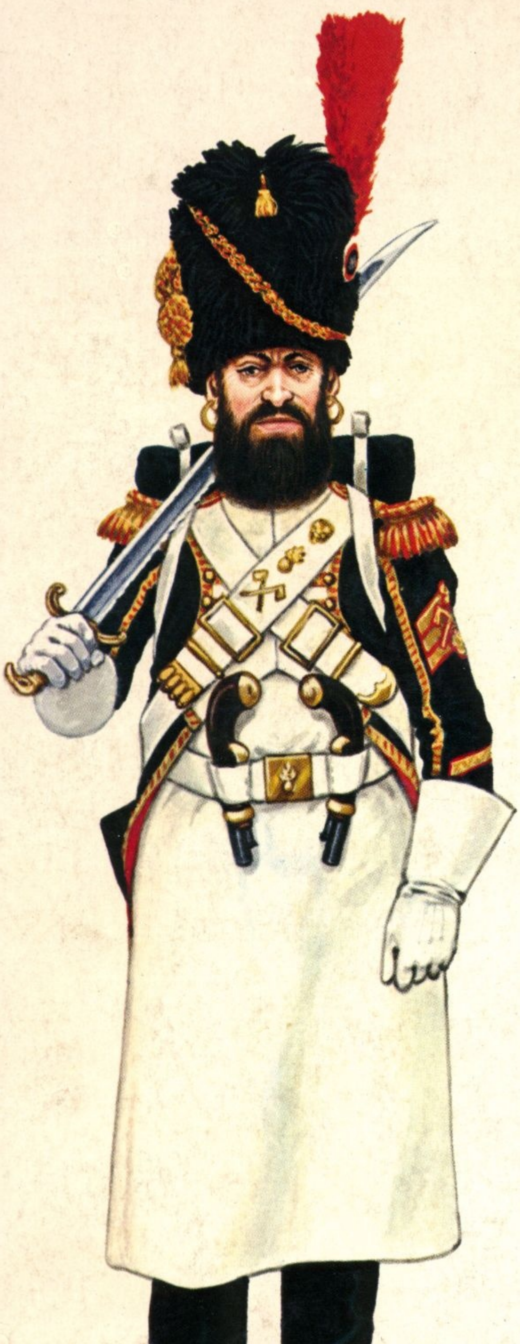
Chasseurs à Pied



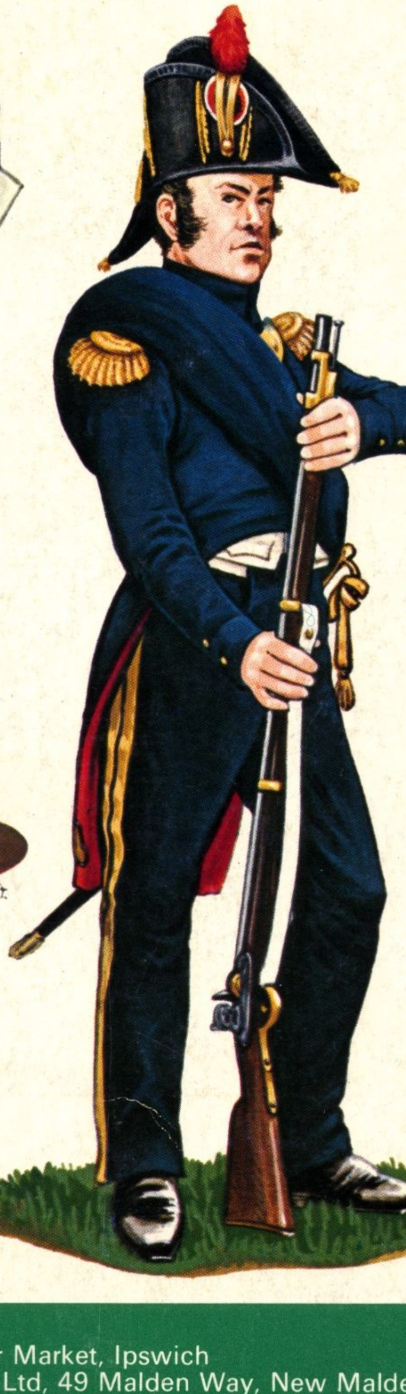


Top row:
Sgt-Major,
3rd Regt.
(full dress).
Sgt-Major,
3rd Regt.
(campaign dress).
Officer,
2nd Regt.
(full dress).

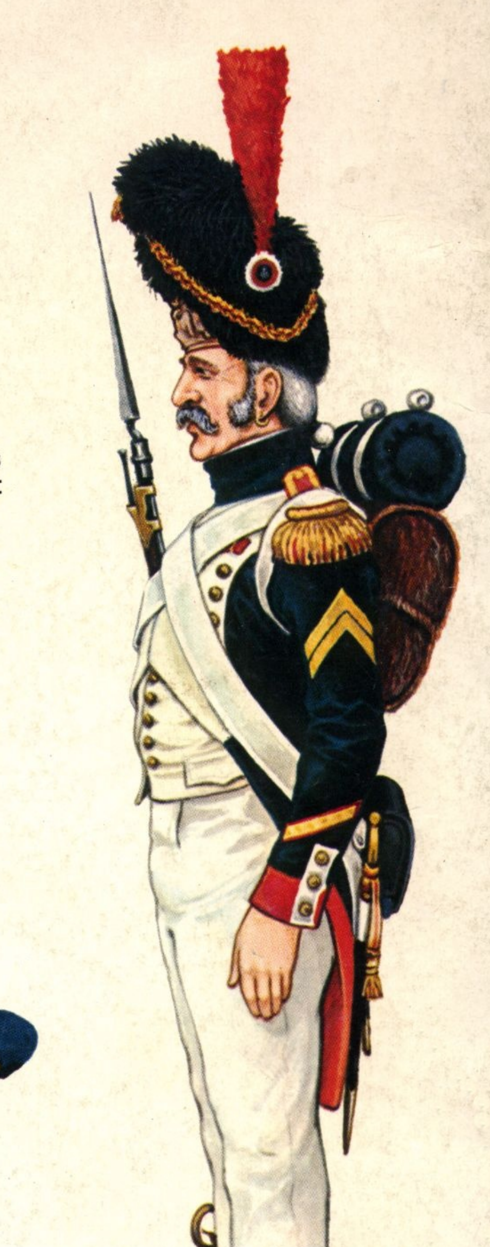
Right:
Chasseur,
2nd Regt.
(undress,
Palace Guard).
Sgt-Major,
1st Regt.
(undress).



Sergeant Pioneer, Grenadiers à Pied. The sergeant wears a special pattern pouch belt with Medusa head, flaming grenade, crossed axes and an animal's paw tip. Note the brass hilted yataghan sword and the brace of pistols in lieu of the 'mousqueton'.



Officer in Service dress, Grenadiers à Pied. This figure is taken from a plate by Raffet. The officer wears the blue undress surtout with blue trousers with unusual gold stripes down the outside seams and is carrying a musket although no cartridge box is evident.



A Sergeant of Napoleon's Elba Guard. One of the Emperor's old 'Grumblers' on the return from the Island of Elba in March 1815. Contemporary prints of the disembarkation show most of the Grenadiers and the Chasseurs wearing either white or striped loose ticken trousers.

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